



Фёдор Емельяненко

# FEDOR

The Fighting System of the World's  
**UNDISPUTED KING** of MMA

**FEDOR EMELIANENKO**  
GLEN CORDOZA & ERICH KRAUSS



***FEDOR***

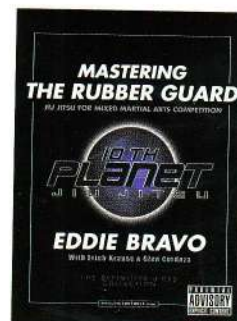
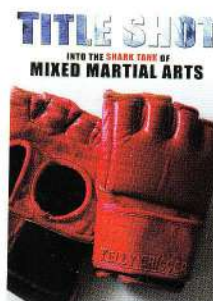
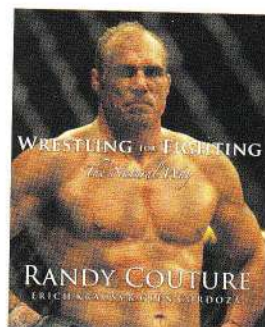
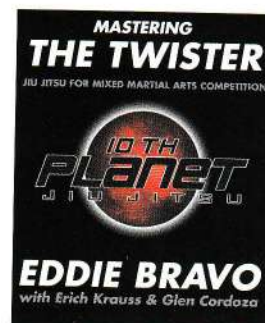
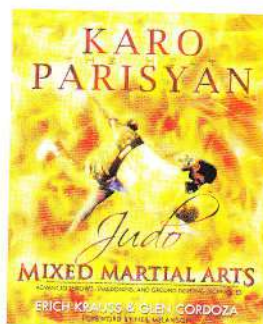
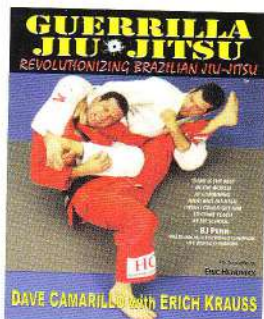
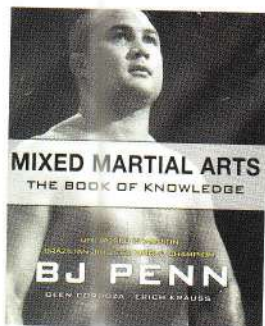


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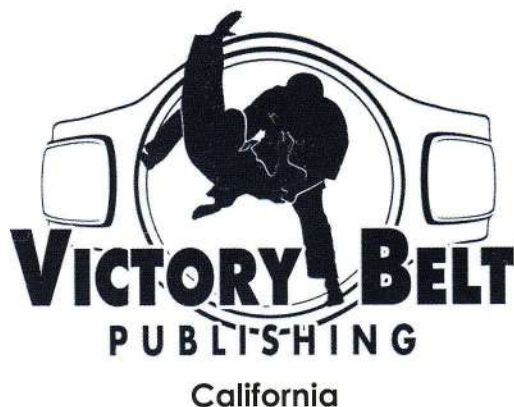


# **FEDOR**

**THE FIGHTING SYSTEM OF THE WORLD'S  
UNDISPUTED KING OF MIXED MARTIAL ARTS**

## **FEDOR EMELIANENKO**

*WITH Glen Cordoza & Erich Krauss*





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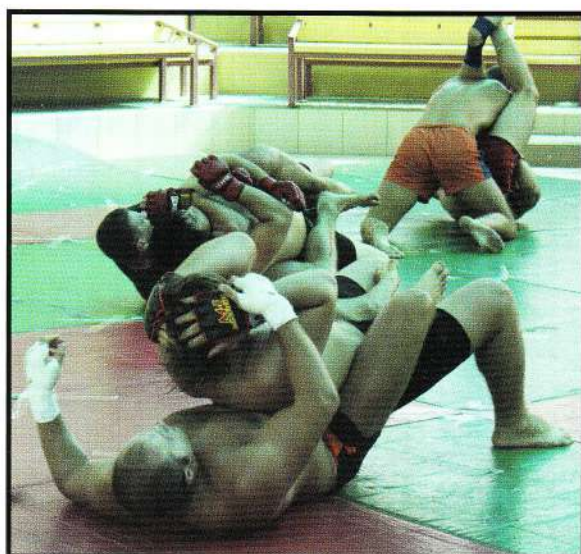
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# INTRODUCTION



*Fedor training with the Red Devil team  
in Stary Oskol*

After spending the first two years of my life in the Ukraine, my family moved to the industrial city Stary Oskol, located in the Belgorod region of Russia, 500 miles south of Moscow. I was a typical child for the most part. I spent my time between music lessons and soccer with my friends, and I idolized all sportsmen. In my mind, the life of a professional athlete had true honor. When I dreamed of where life would take me, my mind would always veer to the path of my greatest hero of all, Yury Vlasov.

Vlasov was a studious-looking man with glasses who had won every single weightlifting competition he entered between 1959 and 1963. He was a master of sport in Russia, shattered the world record in the clean and jerk three times in the 1960 summer Olympics in Rome, became the consecutive six-time European weightlifting champion, and was rightly given the moniker "Strongest Man on the Planet." His hey-day may have been before my time, but in a country where sportsmen are held in the highest regard, he remained a hero even in his old age. Every time I heard stories of his accomplishments, I would envision what it would be like to follow in his footsteps.

At eleven years of age, I got a chance to make that dream a reality. One afternoon I went to the school where my mother worked to visit her, and she introduced me to a coworker who taught sambo, a Russian martial art similar to judo and amateur wrestling, at a local gym during his leisure time. We talked for a while, and then he suggested that I come train with him. Excitement immediately ran through me.

My family had enough money for the essentials, but we didn't have much to spare for extracurricular activities, leading me to believe that my childhood would be filled with learning chords and kicking a ball. Now I was being given a chance to train in a sport where the athletes commanded respect and honor.

Unfortunately, I realized my first day on the mats that my transition from a boy into a man wouldn't happen overnight. Struggling to execute many of the grappling moves and throws, it became apparent that I was far from the most talented child in class. But instead of getting discouraged, I became overly motivated. I dedicated myself to the sport completely in order to make up for my shortcomings. While other kids skipped off to play after practice, I focused on



perfecting my throws and submissions. I practiced them again and again, until I had the proper movements to every technique ingrained in my mind. Slowly, my hard work began to pay off.

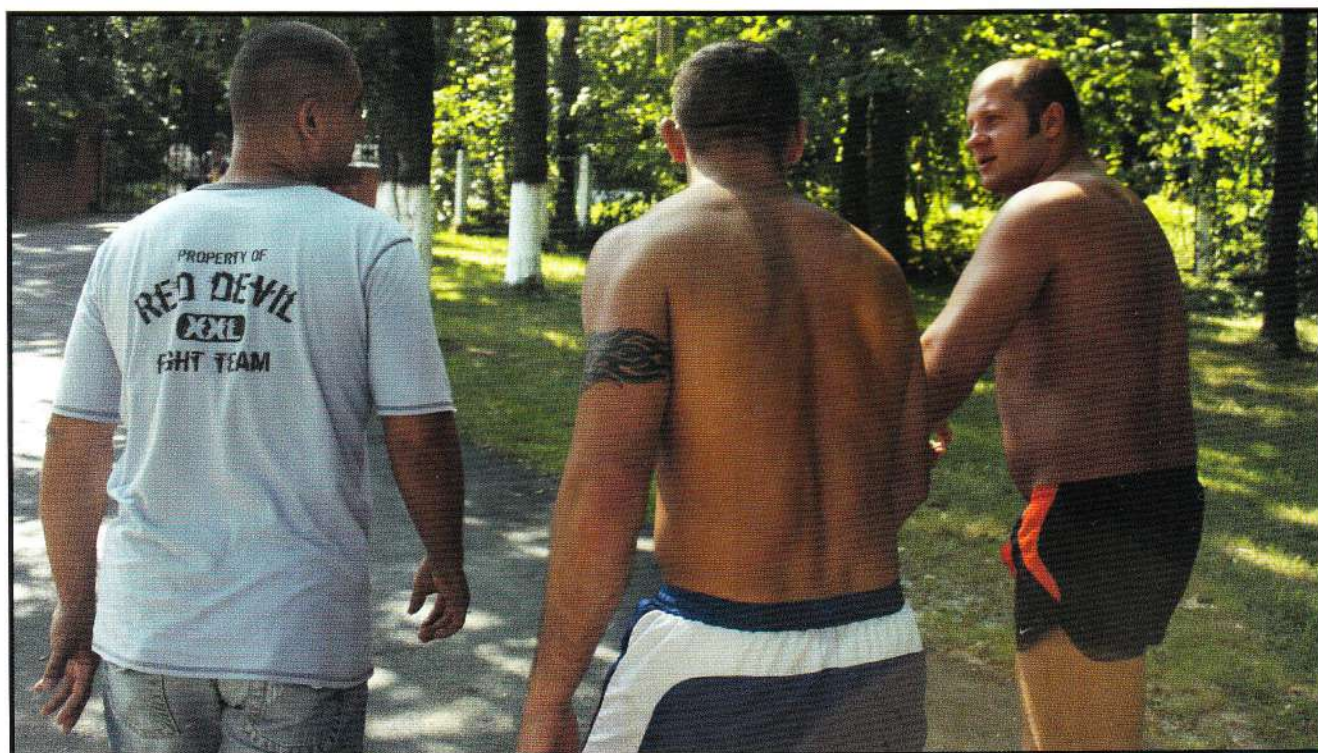
The most exciting and intense moments of my youth were at my first sambo competitions. The pressure was massive, especially at the events where my father sat up in the stands, but whenever I managed to place first, a huge sense of accomplishment would wash over me. I got that feeling from nothing else in life, leading me to believe that I was destined for the sport. I continued with my normal responsibilities, such as helping out my parents with whatever they needed and routinely visiting my grandparents, but every moment of my free time was dedicated to the sport of sambo. At seventeen I even began training children, which did wonders to elevate my game.

I would have gladly continued on this path, but I also felt a call of duty for my country. At eighteen, I joined the Russian Army. In my opinion, spending time in the army is something all boys need to do in order to mature, learn about responsibility, and become prepared to fight for their country. And no matter how much the sport of sambo had given me, it

wasn't until I went into the army that I grew from a boy into a man. My entire view on life changed, and I felt strength grow inside of me.

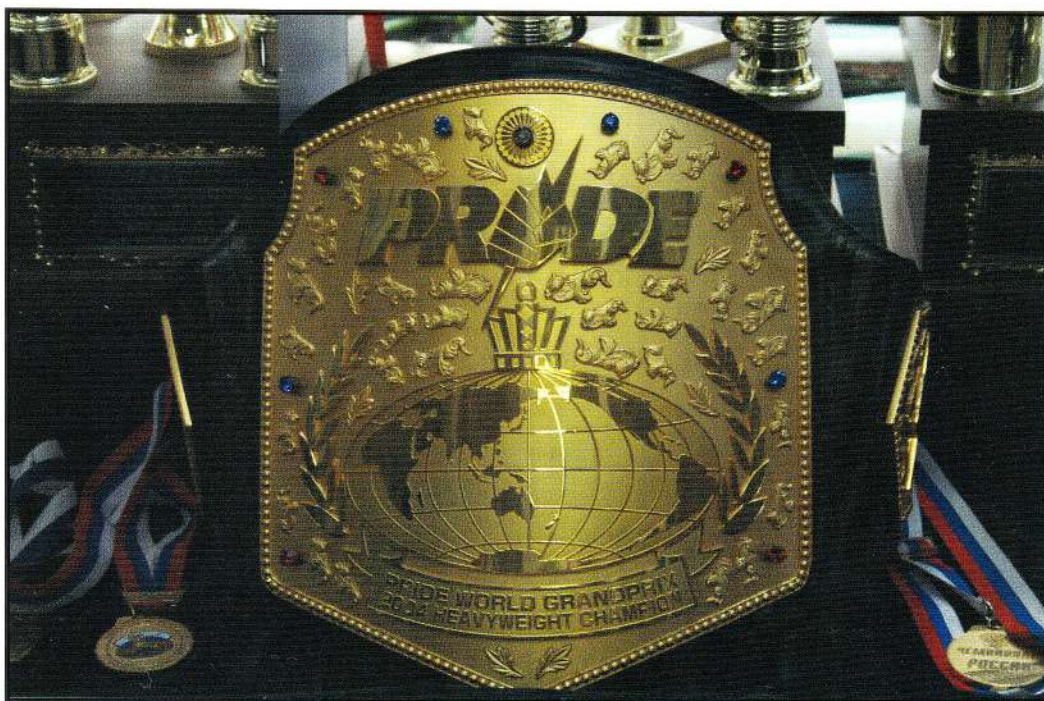
During my first year in the army, I was in the firefighting division, and for the second year I got transferred to a tank division. However, not having any tank experience, I spent most of my time learning about weapon technology and how to shoot. Any spare time I had was devoted to workouts in the gym, but there wasn't much spare time. As a result, I only participated in one fighting event in the two years that I spent in the service.

That changed the instant I got out. I hadn't lost the burning desire for competition, and I immediately resumed my training. If it had been up to me, I would have spent all day every day on the mats, but after two years in the army, I had absolutely no money in my pockets. The majority of sambo players competing came from big cities such as Moscow or St. Petersburg. They had wealthier families and could afford the best facilities and trainers. Due to my financial situation, or lack thereof, I was forced to do most of my training on my own. But even though I didn't have fancy equipment or a former champion dictating



*Fedor chatting with his teammates between practices.*





*Fedor's coveted PRIDE championship belt.*

my regimen, I had acquired a do-or-die mind-set. I was determined to succeed.

I did very well on the sambo circuit, but winning sambo competitions did nothing to better my finances. In addition to sport fighting, I loved to draw, paint, and sketch, but I figured I had a better chance at bringing in money for my family and myself on the mats than I did through the canvas. I began searching for a way to make money fighting. I found a manager, and he introduced me to the people at RINGS, a Japanese MMA fighting organization. In order to become a part of their organization, I first needed to make an impression. I got a tryout, and apparently my skills impressed them because they brought me aboard. I trained with their fighters for six months, honing my skills, and then I began fighting.

My first MMA competition was between Team Russia and Team Georgia, which took place in Tula, Russia, in 2000. It was my warm-up fight, a way to prove to the RINGS organization that I was made of the right stuff, and so I took the fight very seriously. Needless to say, I was quite pleased when I submitted my opponent in less than eight minutes.

With a win under my belt, I began competing in Japan. My most memorable fight through the RINGS organization was against Renato Sobral, a fighter whom I considered to be one of the top heavyweights in the world at the time. It proved to be a very tough battle, but I managed a perfect execution of the strategy my coaches and me had developed, and I earned a unanimous decision as a result. The victory elevated my confidence, and I felt ready to battle the other top contenders.

I had several more fights in RINGS and acquired their championship belt, but harboring the desire to compete with the best of the best, I transitioned over to the Pride Fighting Championships, which was also a Japanese MMA fighting organization, but on a much larger scale. Routinely drawing more than 90,000 fans to their fights, they were the largest and most respected MMA event on the planet. Every one of their fighters had been brought aboard because they had proven themselves in other MMA promotions.

After winning a number of fights, I took on the reigning champion, Antonio Nogueira, and won the Pride heavyweight title belt. Next, I took part in the Pride Grand Prix, an elimination tournament between





*After a hard day of practice, Fedor prepares to race his fellow teammates through the woods surrounding their training camp.*

all of the best heavyweights. When I came out on top, I was filled with happiness and joy, yet there was a conflict looming on the horizon. Although I had gone undefeated up to that point, there was another fighter who was also making big waves, Mirko “Crocop” Filipovic, a dangerous kickboxer who had knocked out numerous opponents with his devastating kicks. He hadn’t competed in the Grand Prix, and the fans wanted to see us pitted against one another.

It turned out to be a bit of a physiological war at first. In 2003, CroCop asked me to fight him several times, but I was unable to because I had broken my finger fighting Gary Goodridge. Some time passed, and again he asked me to fight him. We ended up signing a contract, but then Pride management asked me to fight Tsuyoshi Koshaka, a popular Japanese fighter. It was decided that I would fight Filipovic after Koshaka, but that proved impossible when I again broke my finger in the Koshaka fight. With the much-anticipated matchup being postponed yet another time, Filipovic began making claims that I was ducking him.

It wasn’t until 2005 that everything got aligned. I knew that other than my title fight against Antonio Nogueira, it would be my toughest battle to date, so I trained in the mountains of Holland with some of the best fighters and kickboxers in the business. There was some concern going into the fight because I had several injuries, but in the end I was able to implement the game plan we had come up with, put on a good performance, and defeat him. It was a huge victory, not just for me but also my trainers.

Beating Filipovic put me on top, and a lifelong dream had been achieved. As a child my brother and I only had one sweater between us, and we would swap it back and forth to stay warm in the cold Russian winters. Through fighting, I was able to solve my family’s financial crisis for good. It also allowed me to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin and give respect and importance to the thousands of young Russian MMA fighters who would hopefully follow and replace me. As a child I had idolized Yury Vlasov—he had been the driving force behind my early success. Thinking that I could inspire a Russian

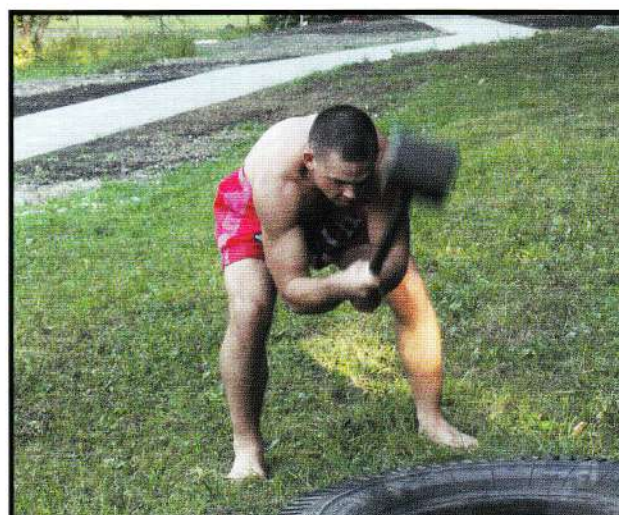
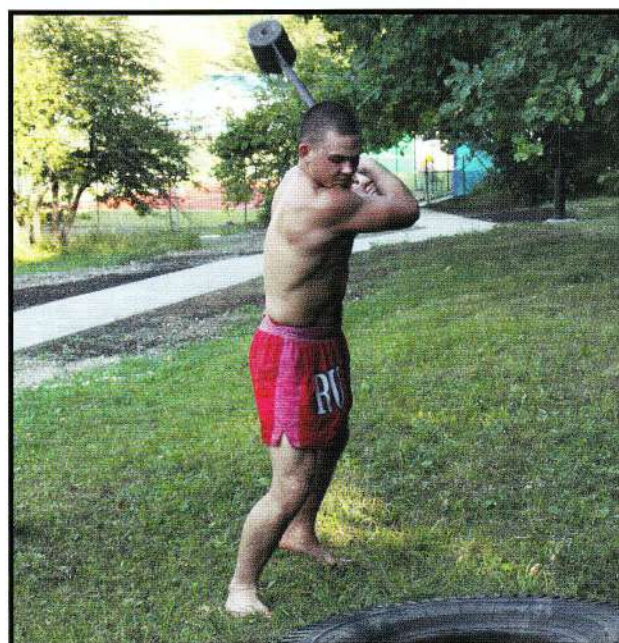
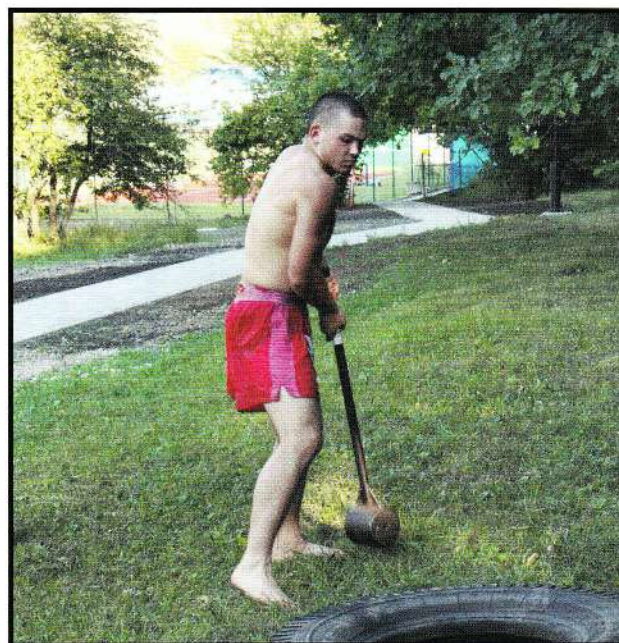


child to train and dedicate himself the way Yury had inspired me meant the world.

Fighting has also given me a second family in my team, the Red Devils. All of us share a common goal—to push ourselves beyond our limits in order to reach our potential in the art of fighting. This entails three grueling practices a day, six days a week. We don't have fancy equipment or a personal chef. All we have are a few ancient mats, chapped sparring equipment, a very steep hill, an old tire, a sledgehammer, and a mess hall that serves meat and potatoes.

We believe in the old Russian training, which is basically to give everything you have plus a little you don't every time you show up to practice. It doesn't matter if none of us is fighting for six months. We are all there three times a day, running five miles through the woods, sprinting up the mountain until half of us are puking, grinding out hundreds of push-ups, shadow boxing for hours on end, conducting position sparring on the ground, and sparring on our feet with enough force that blood routinely flows down our bodies along with the sweat. While other teams take time off after their fights, we return to the gym for another day of abuse. For the Red Devils, the gym is our home and training is a necessity of life.

Unfortunately, I cannot teach the Russian work ethic through a book. What I can teach are the techniques that my teammates and I practice day in and day out, the techniques that have allowed us to defeat opponents from a number of different disciplines and of all shapes and sizes. Many of the techniques might not seem as fancy as the ones demonstrated in other books, but I guarantee that the ones on the following pages have all been tried and tested in battle. I firmly believe that if you learn the following moves, and then combine that skill with a strong work ethic, you'll have all the tools needed to reach the top of the MMA mountain. What will determine whether or not you make it there boils down to desire.



*Fedor's fellow Red Devil teammate putting in some hard work after practice.*



# STRIKING

In this section I cover the punches, kicks, and checking techniques that I've found to be most effective in MMA competition. Later in the book I'll show how to utilize each technique as both an attack and a counter, as well as how to blend techniques together to form fluid combinations, but in the beginning it is important to focus on proper form, which is the reason I demonstrate the majority of moves in this first section without an opponent. With the strikes, pay special attention to hip movement and footwork. Learning how to employ your hips and move your feet will not only give you more power behind your punches and kicks, but it will also allow you to transition smoothly into your next strike. With the checking techniques, work tirelessly on developing proper form and maintaining your balance. Both will help greatly when working on throwing counterpunches and kicks after checking. Due to the small gloves used in MMA, I do not cover techniques that involve using your arms to block punches aimed at your head. In my opinion, evading punches by using footwork and head movement is a much better tactic. To acquire these kinds of evasive techniques, flip to the counterattacks section.

## PUNCHING TECHNIQUES

Staying relaxed is the key to throwing a fast and powerful punch. The goal is to whip your arm out and snap your fist into your target as though it were a ball on the end of a chain. If you have tension in your arm, you'll burn unnecessary energy, your movement will be slow, and your punch will push instead of whip into your target, causing considerably less damage.

- \* If you throw a punch with your right hand, keep your left arm tucked to your side and your left hand up protecting your face. If you throw a punch with your left hand, do the same with your right arm.
- \* Always bring your punching hand straight back to its proper place in your stance.
- \* Strike your target with the index and middle knuckles of your hand. They are the biggest and strongest knuckles and will cause the most damage to your opponent. If you strike with the smaller knuckles, you risk breaking your hand.
- \* When you throw a punch with your right hand, protect the right side of your jaw against counterpunches by elevating your right shoulder. When you throw a punch with your left hand, elevate your left shoulder to protect the left side of your jaw.
- \* With most of my punches I turn my hand over more than most fighters. This has several benefits:
  - 1) Ensures that I strike with the index and middle knuckles of my hand.
  - 2) Thrusts my shoulder above my jaw, protecting the side of my face.
  - 3) Increases the snap of the punch, which in turn increases power.
  - 4) Allows me to cover more distance with my punch.
- \* Always remain balanced on both feet. If you lean too far to one side or distribute too much weight on one leg, you'll not only be in a poor position to strike, but you'll also be vulnerable to your opponent's attacks.
- \* As a rule of thumb, don't lean your shoulders forward past your hips when throwing punches. Although many fighters do this in the hopes of generating more power or reaching their target, it usually compromises their balance, positioning, and the power of their strike.
- \* An MMA fight is not a boxing match. Instead of throwing punches to score points, throw your punches with the intention of knocking your opponent out.



## KICKING TECHNIQUES

Just as with punches, I throw kicks differently than most MMA fighters. Instead of throwing what is commonly referred to as “round kicks” in a circular fashion, as do most Thai boxers, I thrust my hips forward and throw my leg straight out. The main difference is that you attack your target vertically rather than horizontally. In addition to producing a fast kick that possess knockout power, it allows you to quickly recover your stance should you miss your target. When you throw the round kick the traditional way and miss your target, the momentum of the kick will often turn your back to your opponent, giving him a chance to attack with strikes or a takedown.

- \* With the majority of kicks, connect with your target using the middle portion of your shin. It will cause the most damage to your opponent when you land the kick, and cause you the least amount of damage should he check it.
- \* Always keep your guard up when throwing kicks. For example, if you throw a right low kick, keep your left hand up to protect the left side of your face and extend your right arm outward at head level to maintain distance between you and your opponent. If you get into the habit of dropping your guard, it is only a matter of time until your opponent counters one of your kicks by throwing a hard punch at your face.
- \* Always keep your posture straight and erect. If you lean to one side or the other when throwing kicks, your balance will be compromised, you'll lose a considerable amount of power behind your kick, and you'll slow your recovery to your stance.
- \* Kicking can make you vulnerable to takedowns. For this reason, it's wise to either set your kicks up with punches or throw them as your opponent is backing away.
- \* Unless you're moving into another attack that requires you to step forward, immediately bring your leg back to its original position in your fighting stance after throwing a kick.
- \* With all kicking techniques it is important to keep your leg relaxed. If there is tension in your leg, you'll burn unnecessary energy and hinder the momentum generated by your hips. To help keep your leg loose, tighten your core and keep your posture straight.
- \* As with all strikes, judging distance and having proper timing are very important when throwing kicks. If you throw a kick when your opponent is out of range, you risk connecting with your foot, which can lead to broken bones. If your timing is off and you throw a kick when your opponent's defenses are strong, there is a chance that he will check the kick, which results in a collision of shins and an ample amount of pain. To improve your sense of distance and timing, spar as much as possible wearing protective gear on your legs.

## CHECKING TECHNIQUES

- \* When your opponent throws a low or mid-range kick, block the strike using the inside portion of your shin by angling your knee toward the outside of your body. If you lift your leg straight up, the kick will connect with the outside portion of your shin, which can cause damage to vital muscles.
- \* When checking mid- to high-range kicks, elevate your knee past your elbow to create a solid barrier between your leg and arm. Leaving a gap between the two is a great way to end up with a broken rib.
- \* Keep your posture straight and erect. Leaning to one side can compromise your balance and hinder your ability to properly block the strike.
- \* Unless you're moving forward with a counterattack, always return your leg to its proper place in your stance after checking a kick.
- \* Timing is very important. The instant your opponent's foot leaves the mat, you should elevate your leg to check his kick.



## STANCE

It is important to tailor your fighting stance to your build, fighting style, and attributes, but whatever stance you choose, it must allow you to attack and defend efficiently. In order to be a well-rounded fighter, you must have punches, kicks, and wrestling techniques in your arsenal of attacks, and in your defensive arsenal you must have checks and sprawls. If your stance limits you from executing any of these movements, you'll most likely miss out on offensive and defensive opportunities. To prevent this from happening, it is important that your stance follow the fundamental guidelines described below.

### 1. A SHOULDER'S WIDTH APART

Your feet should be spread roughly a shoulder's width apart. As a rule of thumb, you want to try to maintain this spacing at all times. If your feet get too close together or too far apart, your balance and movement will be compromised.

### 2. STRAIGHT AND FORTY-FIVE

Keep the toes of your lead foot pointed straight ahead at your opponent, and keep your rear foot angled outward at about a forty-five-degree angle. This is considered an aggressive foot positioning and will allow you to move fluidly in all directions.

### 3. SLIGHT BEND IN THE LEGS

Maintaining a slight bend in your legs creates a platform from which you can aggressively attack or defend. Locking your knees hinders your movement and can result in serious damage to your legs.

### 4. STRAIGHT & RELAXED POSTURE

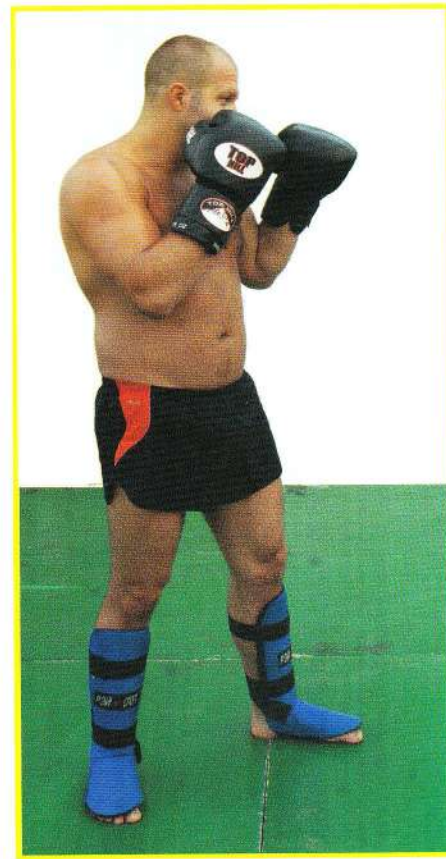
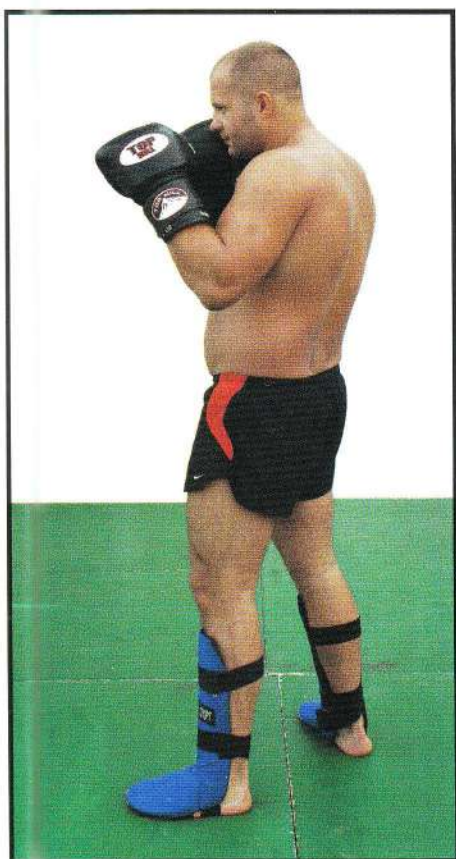
Keeping your posture straight and staying relaxed not only allows you to punch, kick, and shoot in for a takedown without telegraphing your movements, but it also helps you to retain the power generated by your hips.

### 5. ELBOWS TUCKED & RELAXED

Keeping your elbows tucked to your sides and your hands up at chin level will help protect you from strikes and make it easier to throw fast and powerful punches. When first starting out, constantly check your stance in the mirror. If you see that your elbows have drifted away from your body, relax, shake your arms out, and then reestablish your stance.

### 6. CHIN TUCKED

Whether you're standing still or throwing a strike, always keep your chin tucked. If your arms are in their proper place, this will position the majority of your jaw behind the protective padding of your lead shoulder and better guard you from strikes. When starting out, constantly check your form in the mirror. If your chin has a tendency to float upward as you throw jabs and crosses, you will be vulnerable to counterstrikes. To prevent this from becoming a bad habit, conduct your bag work and sparring while holding a tennis ball underneath your chin.



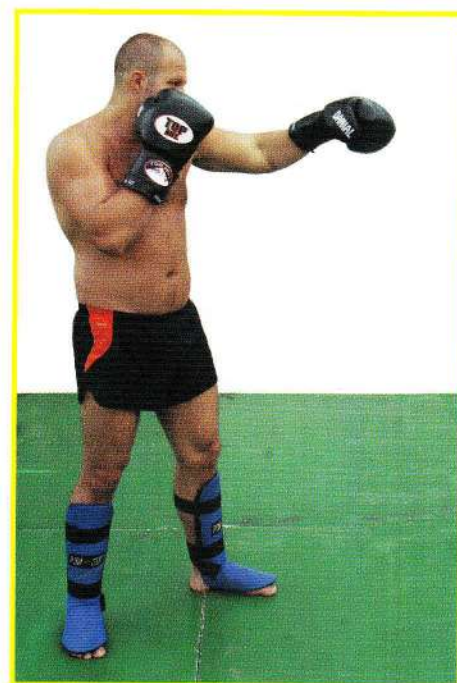
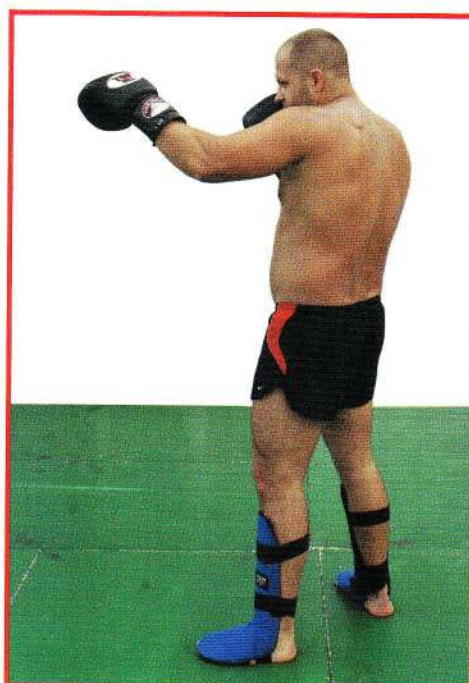
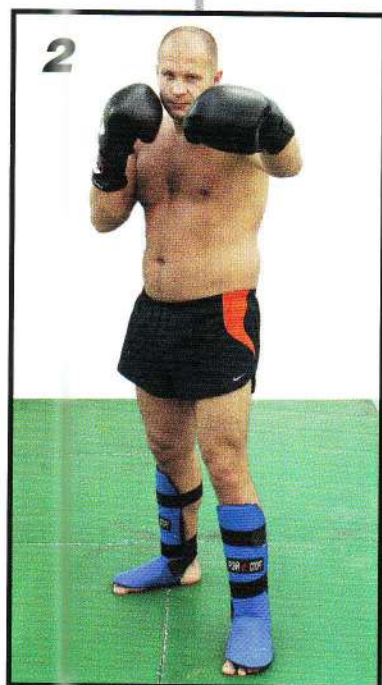
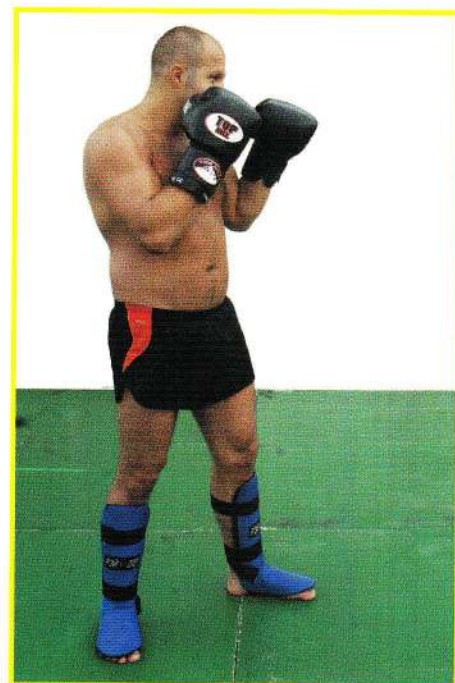
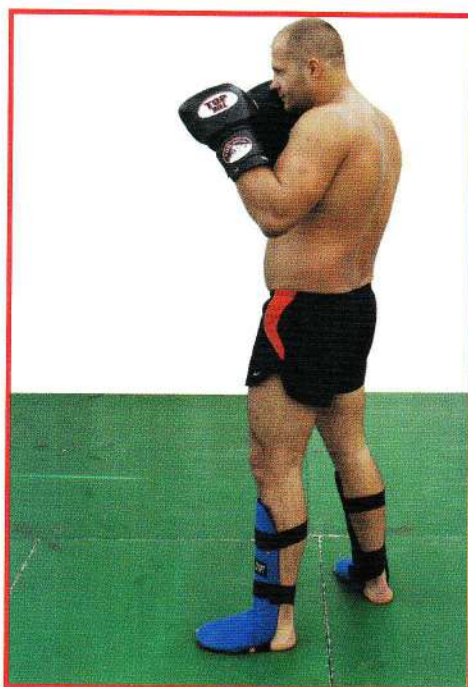


## STRAIGHT SNAP JAB

Unlike most punches, the snap jab is thrown from the shoulders instead of from the hips. For this reason, it usually doesn't possess knockout power, but it is an excellent tool for setting up other more powerful strikes such as a cross. Being an extremely fast punch, the snap jab can also be used effectively as a counterstrike when your opponent comes toward you with a striking combination. For example, if your opponent lunges forward with a jab/cross combination, throwing the snap jab after his jab and before his cross can break his rhythm, creating a perfect opportunity for you to land a power shot. Due to the dynamics of the strike, it is best used when in close range. And as with all close-range strikes, developing the proper timing and sense of distance is extremely important. The best way to accomplish this is to spar as much as possible. Once you get comfortable throwing a single snap jab, practice throwing two in a row in rapid succession. Sometimes this will blind and confuse your opponent, creating an opportunity to shoot in for a takedown or land a power blow such as an overhand right.

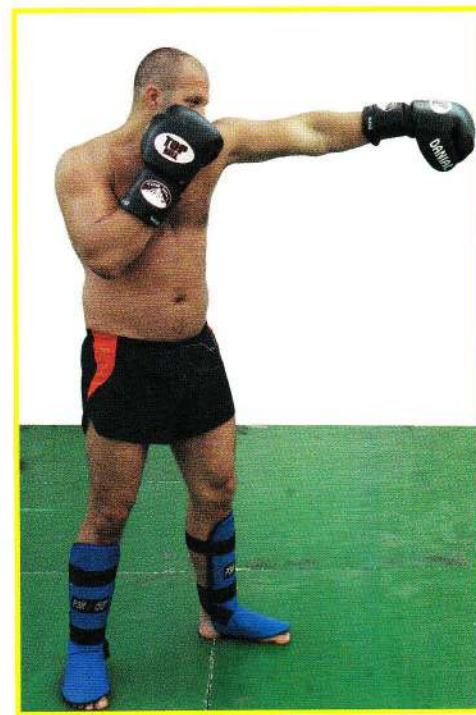
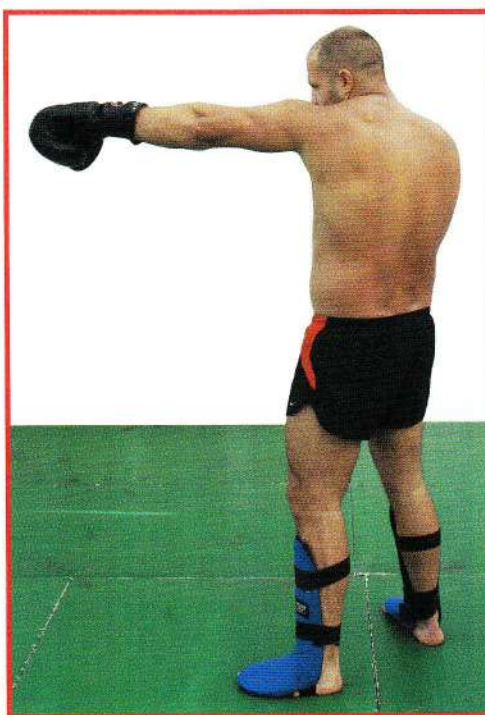
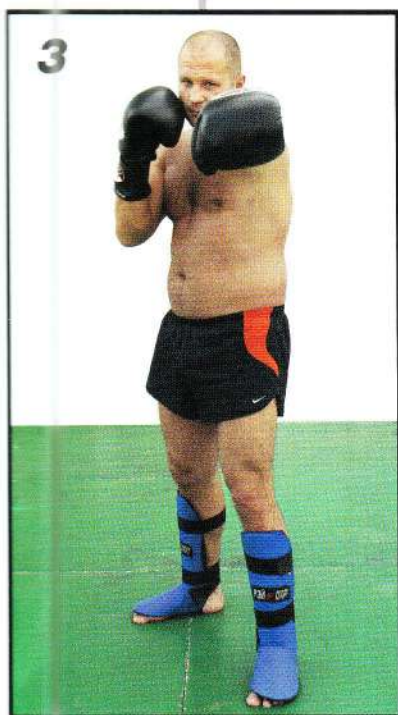


I'm in my fighting stance.

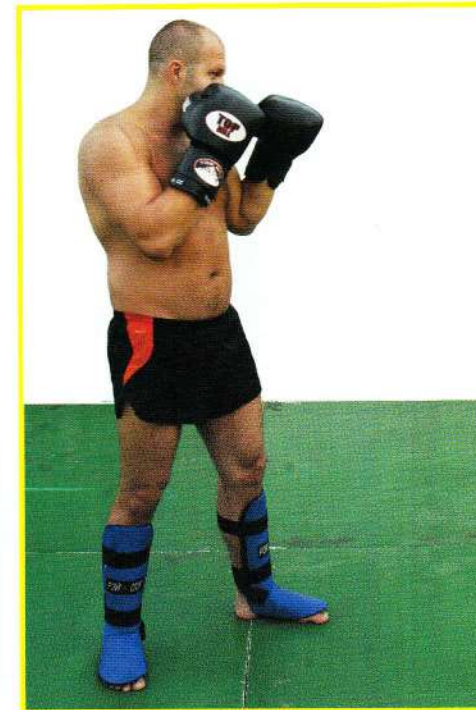
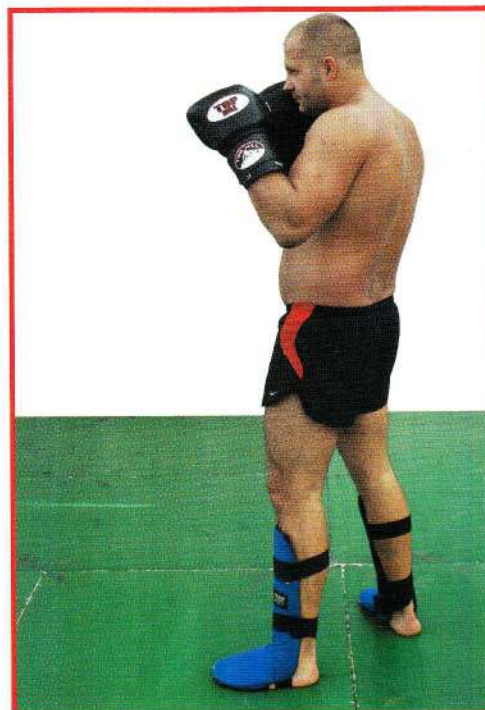
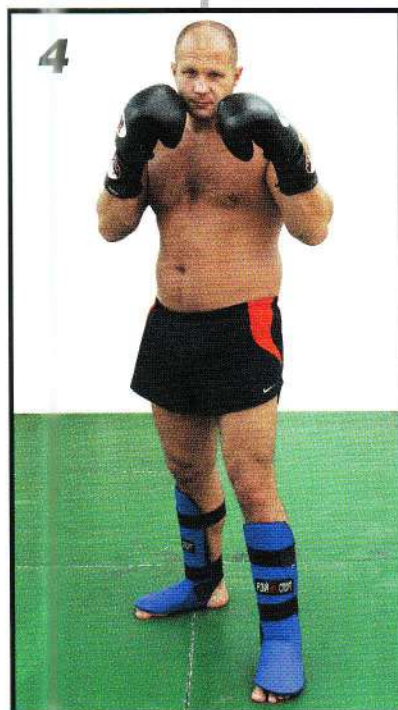


With my right elbow tucked tight to my body and my right hand protecting my face, I throw my left arm straight out and corkscrew my hand in a clockwise direction. Notice that as my arm extends, my left shoulder rises up to protect the left side of my jaw.





I continue to extend my left arm and rotate my hand in a clockwise direction. As my elbow locks out, I complete the rotation of my hand and tighten my fist. Because I utilized proper form and stayed relaxed, my fist snaps into my target. Notice how my thumb is angled toward the mat on my right at a forty-five-degree angle. This allows me to cover the maximum amount of distance, as well as make contact with my target using only the knuckles of my index and middle fingers.



I pull my left arm straight back and reestablish my fighting stance.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

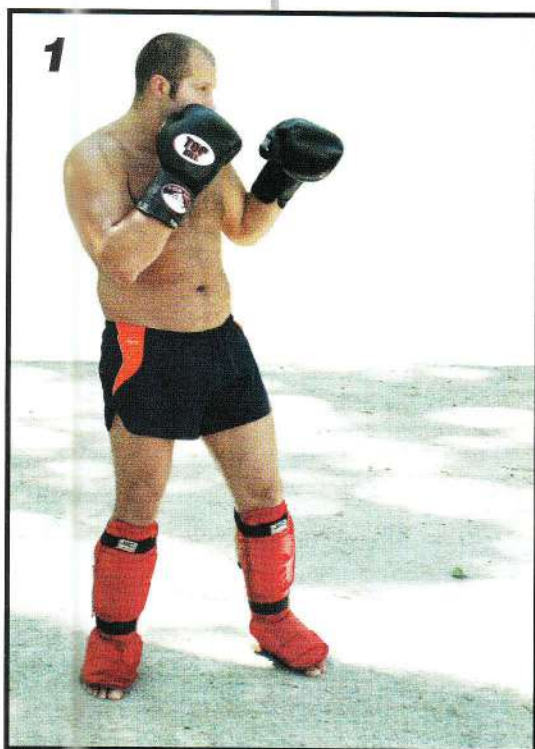
PRIMARY TARGET: **CHIN, NOSE, EYES**

- \*Focus on speed rather than power.
- \*Turning your hand over just before impact will produce whipping power behind your punch and ensure that you connect with the knuckles of your index and middle fingers.
- \*Instead of using your legs and hips to generate power, throw the snap jab from your shoulder. Although the force of the strike may not be enough to knock out your opponent, it leaves your hips in a perfect position to immediately follow up with a powerful strike.
- \*As you throw the strike, keep your elbow tight to your body. Letting it bow out to the side will not only reduce the speed and power of your punch, but it will also make it easier for your opponent to see the punch coming.

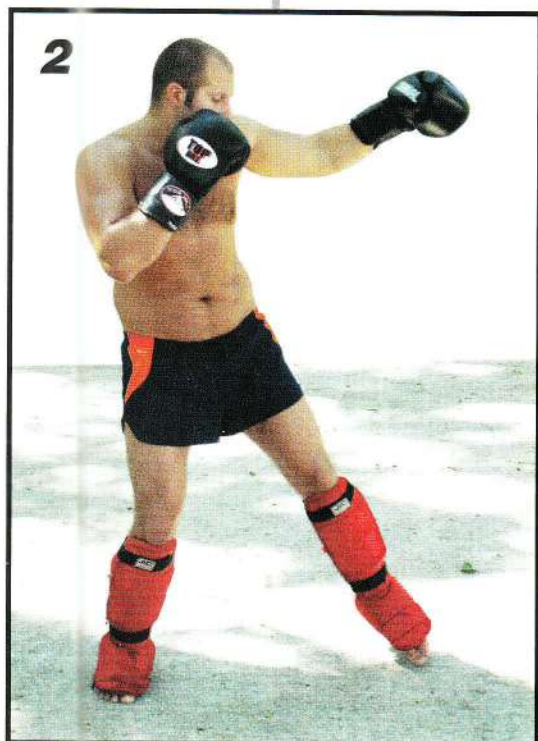
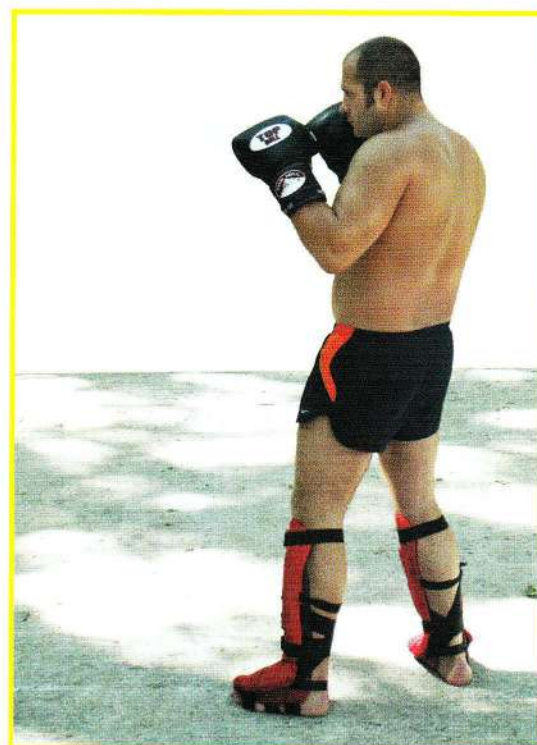


## STRAIGHT LONG JAB

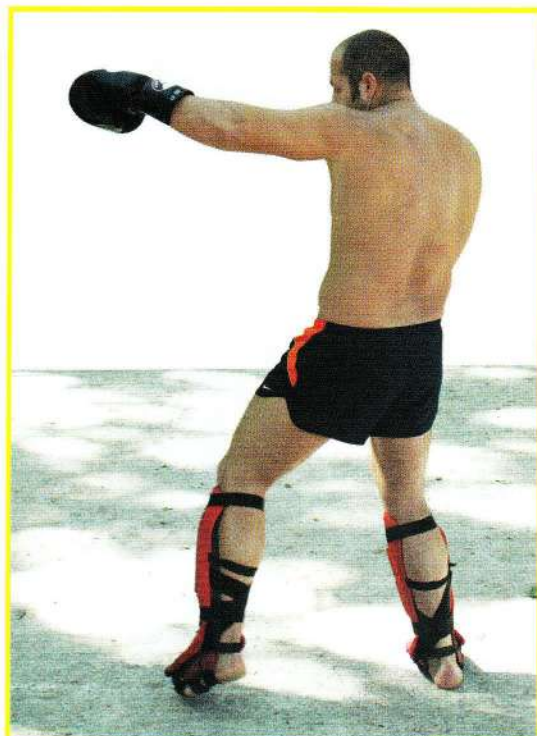
The long jab is best utilized when you are outside of punching range. To cover the distance between you and your opponent, lunge forward off your rear leg, slide your lead foot across the ground, and throw your fist straight out. How far you lunge should be based upon the distance of your opponent. If he is outside of kicking range, you'll want to utilize an explosive lunge. Although the movement involved is not as stealthy as the snap jab, it packs a lot more power. With all of your weight moving forward, it is quite possible to knock your opponent out if you land to a vulnerable part of his face. However, your opponent will most likely react to the strike by parrying, ducking his head, or backing away. Depending upon his reaction, you can follow up with a secondary attack such as a punch, kick, or takedown. Later in the book I will demonstrate how to put together specific combinations based upon your opponent's reaction to your first strike, but first it is important to learn the dynamics of the punch. Just remember, the long jab is best used to cover distance between you and your opponent. The snap jab is best utilized when you're already in striking range.



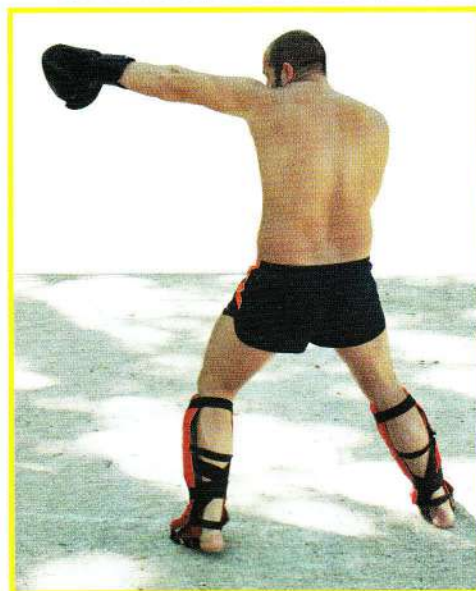
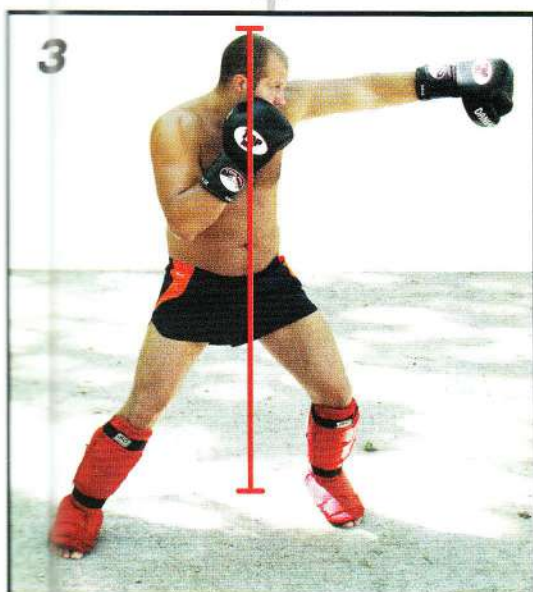
I'm in my fighting stance.



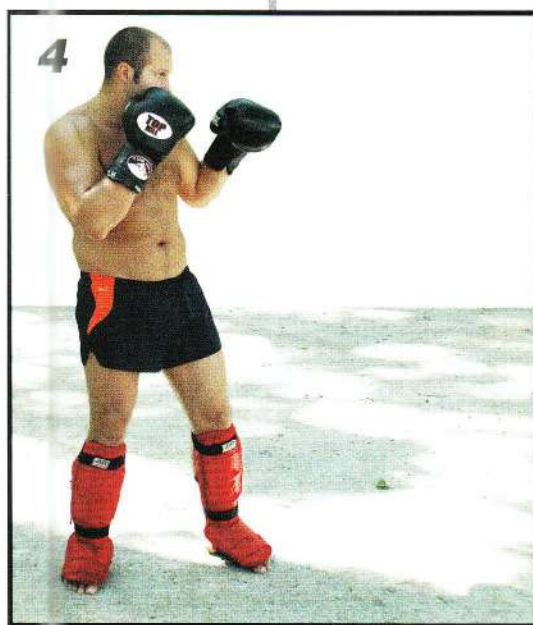
Driving off my right leg, I slide my left foot forward and extend my left arm straight out. As my left arm begins to straighten, I rotate my fist in a clockwise direction. Not only does this help generate power behind the punch, but it also elevates my left shoulder, protecting my jaw. Notice how I've kept my right elbow tight to my body and my right hand up to protect my face.



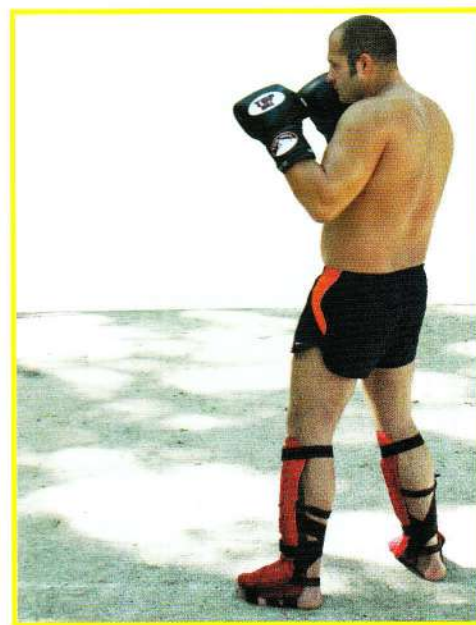




I plant my left foot on the ground and fully extend my left arm. As my elbow locks out, I complete the rotation of my hand and tighten my fist. With my left thumb now pointed at a forty-five-degree angle toward the ground to my right, I have not only maximized the distance I can cover with the punch, but I have also ensured that only the knuckles of my index and middle fingers will make contact with my target. Notice how my shoulders and hips are vertically aligned, allowing me to maintain my balance and generate maximum speed and power for the punch.



I pull both my left foot and hand back into my fighting stance.



### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: **CHIN, NOSE, EYES, SOLAR PLEXUS.**

\*When you step forward, slide your lead foot across the ground instead of elevating it. This ensures that you stay balanced during your entry.

\*Don't extend your lead shoulder forward past your hips (see step 3). If you were to drive an imaginary pole straight down through the top of your head, it should come out directly between your legs. If you lean forward, you'll have to reset your stance before you can launch your secondary attack, which gives your opponent an opportunity to counter.

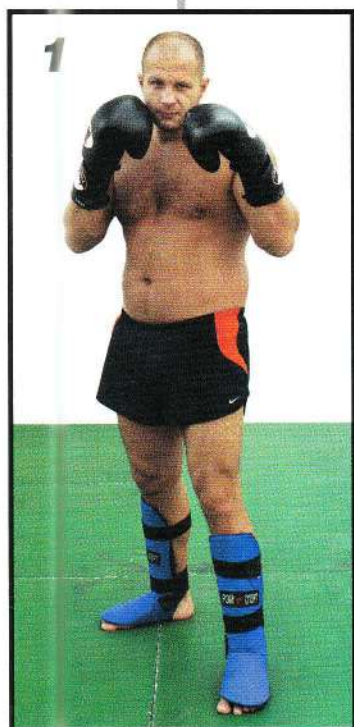
\*Don't let your feet get too spread out as you lunge forward. It is important to maintain a balanced position that allows you to defend against a counterattack or immediately follow up with a secondary attack.

\*If you over-rotate your hips in an attempt to generate power, your punch will become more of a hook than a jab. The goal is to throw your punch straight out and have it snap in your opponent's face or torso. By stepping forward your hips will naturally turn. This rotation, combined with your forward momentum, can produce a great deal of power.

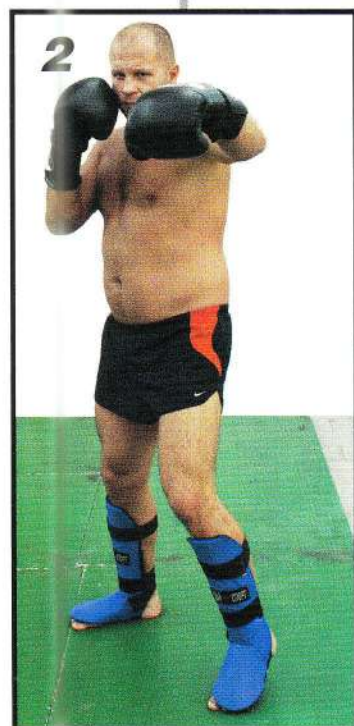
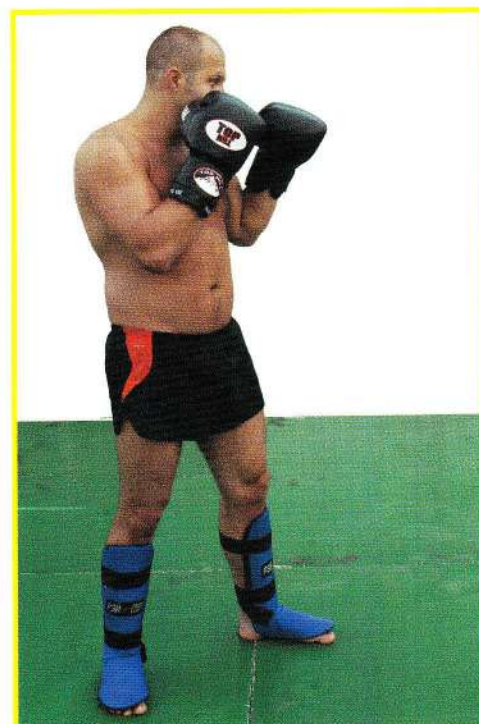


## LEFT HOOK

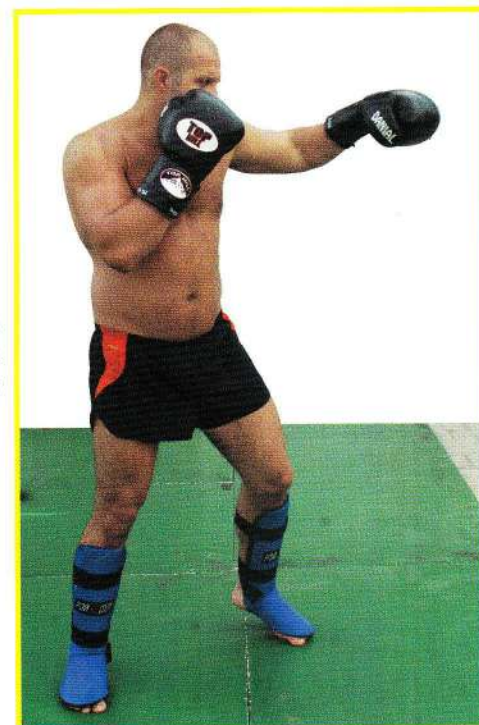
I throw my lead-handed hook differently than most. The majority of MMA fighters will rotate their hips, body, and striking arm on a circular path all at the same time. With their striking arm looping out to the side and all parts of their body moving together in one direction, the punch is easy for their opponent to spot. Landing such a strike can certainly cause damage, but it tends to produce more of a push than a crisp impact. To land my lead hook a larger percentage of the time and deliver a more brain-jarring blow, I'll begin the punch by throwing my fist straight out, almost as if I am throwing a jab. As my fist nears the target, I will quickly snap my hips, flare my elbow out to the side, and rotate my striking hand over so that my thumb is pointing toward the mat. Delaying the hip and arm rotation disguises the punch as a jab, making it difficult for my opponent to spot, yet still allows me to attack my target from a nonlinear angle. It also produces more of a whipping effect, which leads to a faster and more powerful punch. In the sequence below, I demonstrate how to throw this punch directly from your stance. In the next sequence, I show an alternate version that allows you to generate even more power.



I'm in my fighting stance.



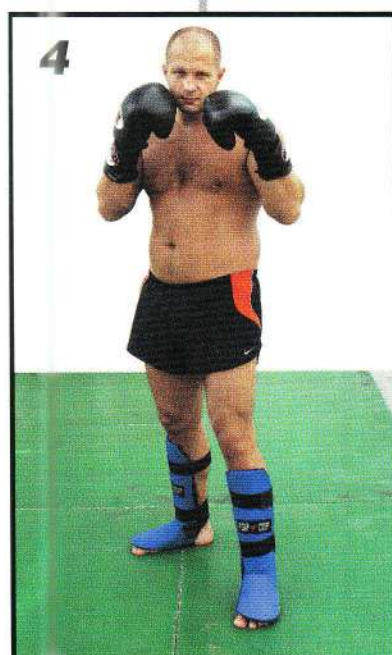
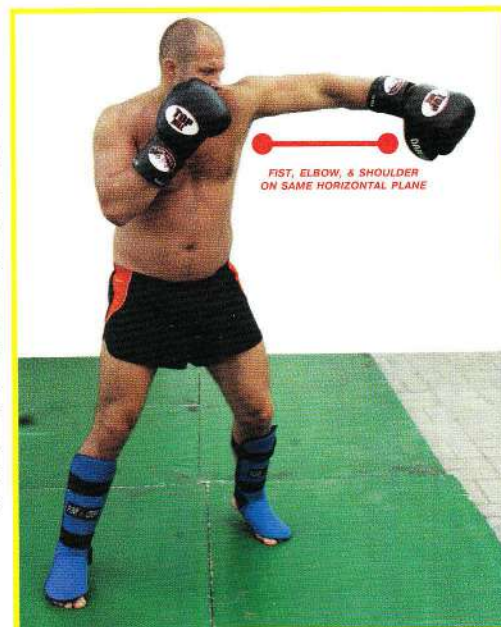
I throw my left hand straight out. As my arm begins to extend, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and corkscrew my fist.



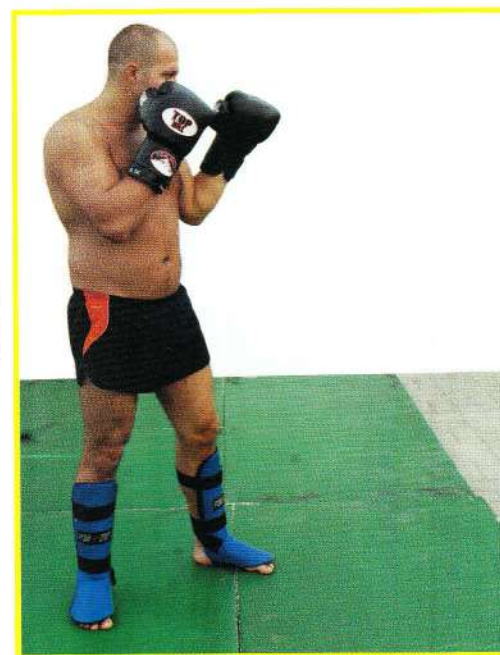




I continue to pivot on my left foot, rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, and turn my fist over. There are a couple of important details worth noting. The first is how my shoulder, elbow, and fist are all aligned on the same horizontal plane. Doing this transfers the full momentum of my rotating hips and shoulders through my arm and fist and into my target. The second detail is the angle of my fist. I'm turning my hand over so that my thumb is almost pointing straight down. Since I'm attacking my opponent's head (preferably the side of his jaw), angling my fist in this manner makes the knuckles of my index and middle fingers the point of contact.



I reestablish my fighting stance by rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and pulling my left hand back toward my face.



### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: **JAW, TEMPLE, SIDE OF NECK.**

\*When you connect with your target, your shoulder, elbow, and fist should be aligned on the same horizontal plane. This ensures that the momentum generated by your legs and hips gets transferred through your arm and into your target. If your body is out of alignment, the power from your core will be lost, turning your hook into a punch thrown from your shoulder.

\*Before making contact with your target, turn your hand over so that your thumb is pointing toward the ground. Not only does this generate more power behind your punch, but it also angles your fist in such a way that you make contact with the knuckles of your index and middle fingers.

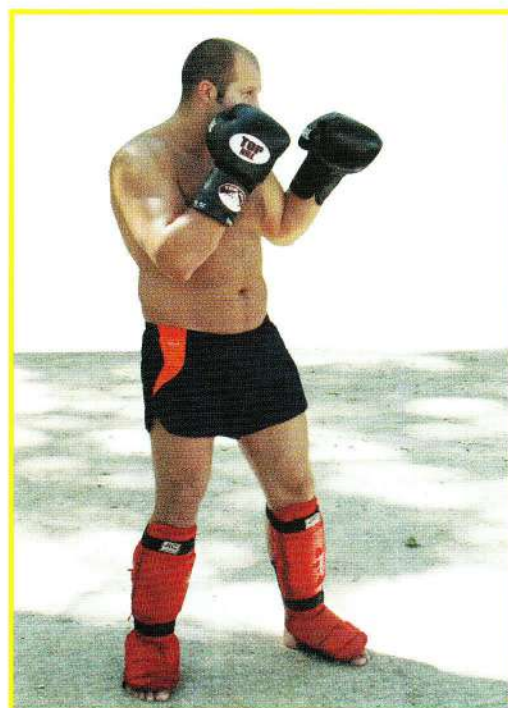


## LEAD POWER HOOK

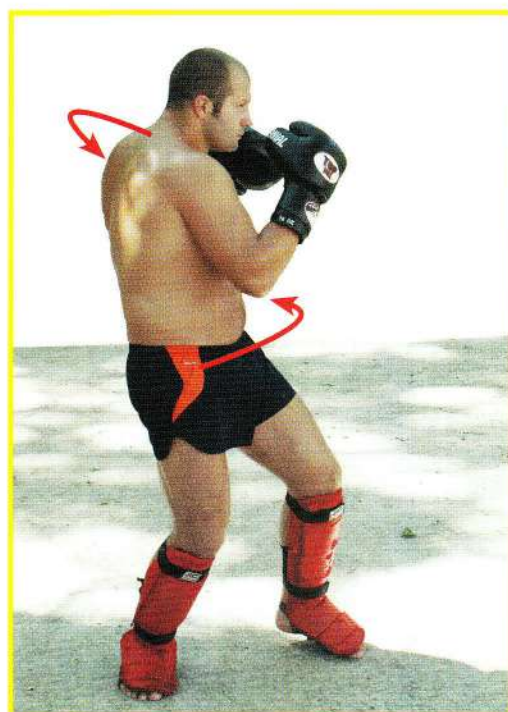
When throwing the lead power hook, I'll first rotate my hips and shoulders in the opposite direction of the punch. In addition to spring-loading my hips, which allows me to throw a more powerful punch, it will often deceive my opponent. If he is watching my body mechanics in an attempt to anticipate my next attack, which is something all good fighters do, my rotation will look as though I'm about to throw a right cross. As he prepares to defend against the right cross, I step my lead foot toward him, uncoil my spring-loaded hips, and throw a powerful left hook and catch him off guard. I've also found it to be a very effective counter for when my opponent throws a right cross (or a lead right jab if he's in a southpaw stance). As his punch nears my face, I'll slip it by rotating my hips and shoulders and moving my head to the outside of his arm. Before he has a chance to pull his extended arm back into his stance, I'll uncoil my hips, lunge forward, and land a powerful hook to the side of his jaw. If you watch some of my fights, you'll see that I've used the lead power hook very effectively as both an attack and a counter.



I'm in my fighting stance.



To set up the lead power hook, I slightly turn my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction to spring-load my hips. If I were using this technique to counter a right cross, not only would my hip and shoulder movement be more dramatic, but I would also slip the punch by moving my head off my centerline (see figure A on next page).



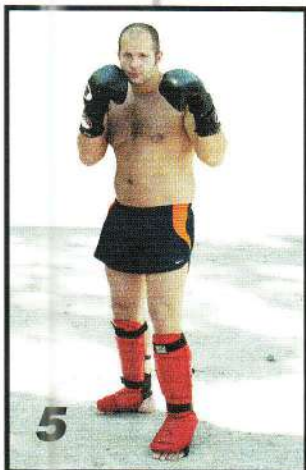




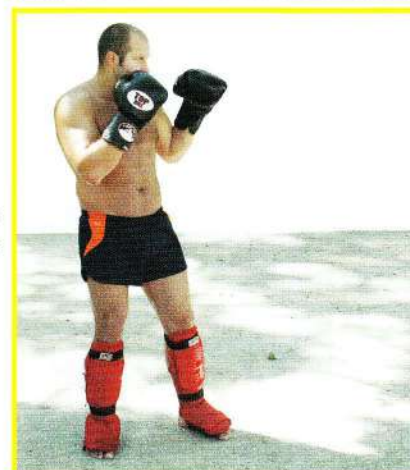
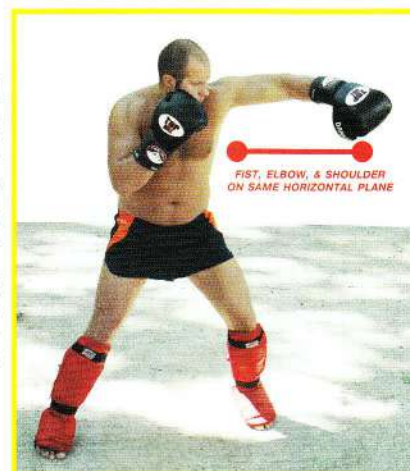
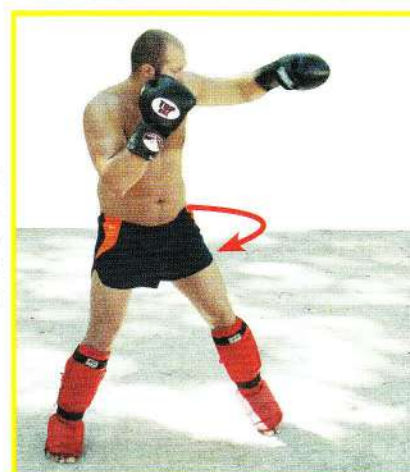
Driving off my right foot, I slide my left foot forward across the ground, rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, and extend my left arm straight out. As my arm straightens, I flare my elbow out to the side and turn my palm toward the ground at the same time, changing the angle of my attack from linear to circular.



I pivot on my left foot and continue to whip my shoulders and hips in a clockwise direction. There are a couple of details worth noting. The first is how my shoulder, elbow, and fist are all aligned on the same horizontal plane. Doing this transfers the full momentum of my rotating hips and shoulder through my arm and fist and into my target. The second detail is the angle of my fist. I'm turning my hand over so that my thumb is almost pointing straight down. Since I'm attacking my opponent's head (preferably the side of his jaw), angling my fist in this manner makes the knuckles of my index and middle fingers the point of contact.



I reestablish my fighting stance by rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and pulling my left hand back toward my face.



### KEY CONCEPTS

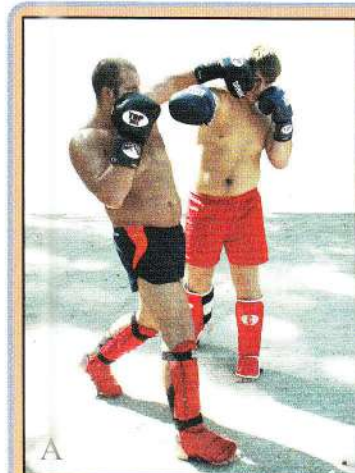
PRIMARY TARGETS: **JAW, TEMPLE, SIDE OF NECK.**

\*Be fluid with your movements. Instead of waiting for your opponent to react to the fake cross when you coil your hips and shoulders, immediately uncoil them and throw the hook. If you delay, your opponent will spot the bluff and prepare his defense.

\*Although it is important for you to gauge range with all your attacks, it is most important with circular attacks like the hook. To increase your versatility with the left hook and the lead power hook, learn to throw them both with a forward step and without.

\*When you connect with your target, your shoulder, elbow, and fist should be aligned on the same horizontal plane. This ensures that the momentum generated by your legs and hips gets transferred through your arm and into your target. If your body is out of alignment, the power from your core will be lost, turning your hook into a punch thrown from your shoulder.

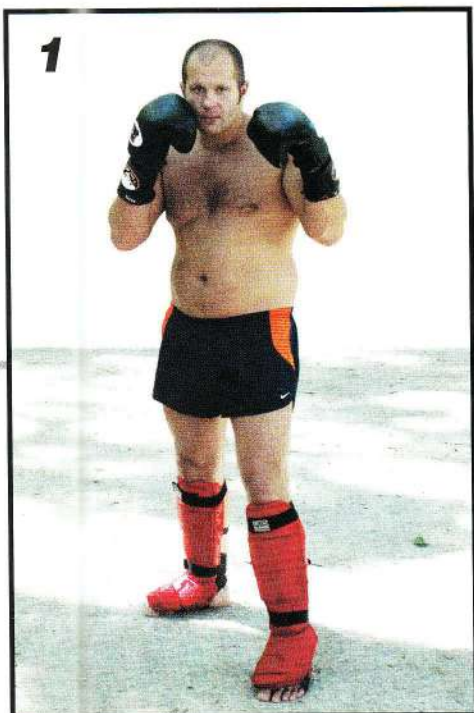
\*Before making contact with your target, turn your hand over so that your thumb is pointing toward the ground. Not only does this generate more power behind your punch, but it also angles your fist in such a way that you make contact with the knuckles of your index and middle fingers.





## OVERHAND JAB

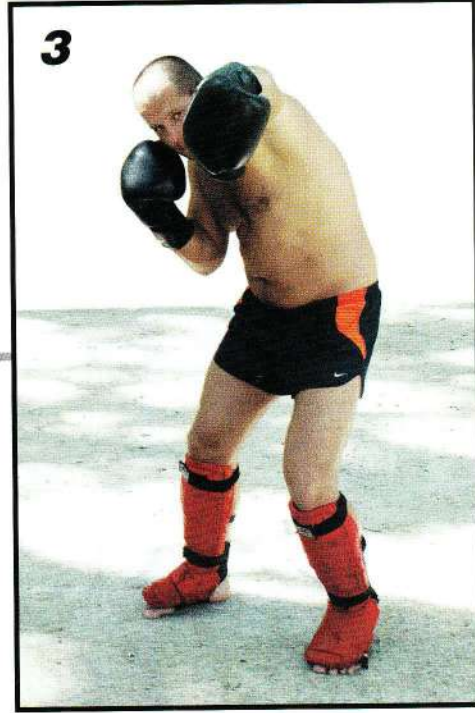
When your opponent throws a left jab or a left cross, the overhand jab is an excellent punch to counter with (see figure A). The goal is to slip his punch and use his compromised positioning to land your jab. To pull off the slip, drop your level by bending at the knees and move your head by bending at the waist. However, don't lean dramatically because it will jeopardize your power and accuracy. Just tilt your body enough to avoid getting hit. As his punch sails by, tag him with the overhand jab. It is important to learn the dynamics of this punch because it combines aspects of both the straight jab and the hook. Like the straight jab, it's a linear punch that derives the majority of its speed and power from the forward momentum of your hips, but because you turn your arm over just prior to impact as you do when throwing a hook, it requires slightly more circular hip rotation than the straight jab. When thrown correctly, your punch should reach forward and then rotate over your opponent's outstretched arm and connect solidly with the center of his face. It's also possible to throw the overhand jab at your opponent's body, but you'll most likely need to lower your elevation by bending at the knees.



1 I'm in my fighting stance.



2 Rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I extend my left hand straight out and begin turning my palm toward the ground. These movements are very similar to when I throw a straight jab.



3 Continuing to extend my left arm, I slightly rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, elevate my left elbow, turn my left hand so that my thumb is pointing toward the ground, drop my level by bending at the knees, and move my head by tilting toward my right side and bending at the waist.



### KEY CONCEPTS

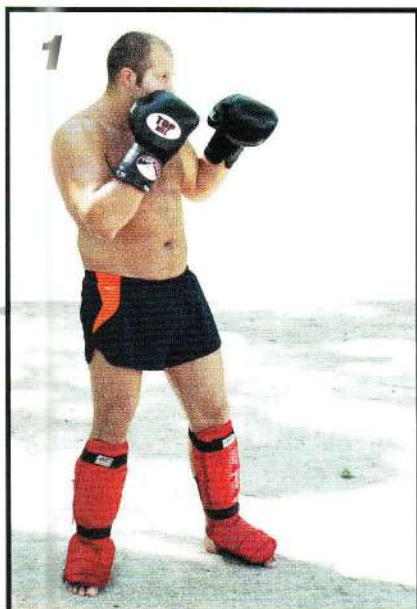
PRIMARY TARGETS: CHIN, NOSE, EYES, SOLAR PLEXUS.

- \*When you throw the overhand jab, rotate your hips and shoulders to generate power for the punch, but don't rotate so much that your jab turns into a hook.
- \*Avoid leaning too far to the side.
- \*In order to maintain balance when throwing this punch, shift your weight onto your lead leg and bend at the waist.

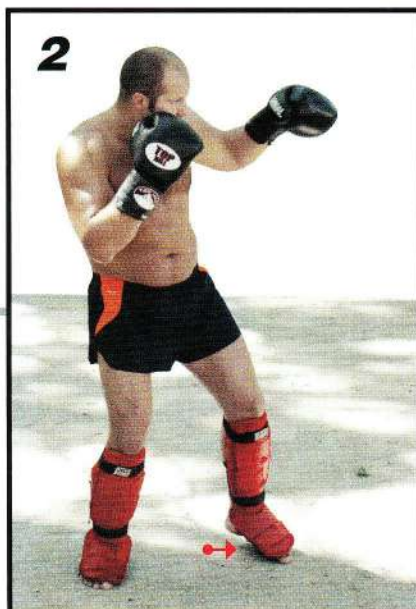


## STEP-IN OVERHAND JAB

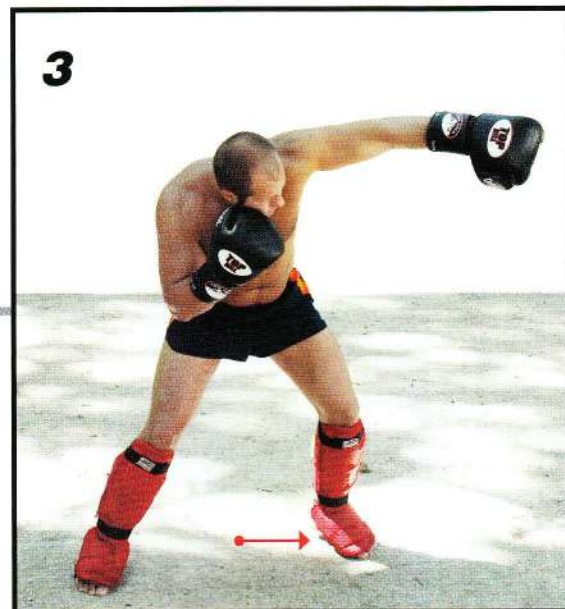
The step-in overhand jab can be used as an attack or a counter, but I particularly like it as an attack. Most opponents will base their strikes on your centerline, so by taking your head off that centerline as you come forward with your attack, it decreases his chances of landing a counter. For example, many opponents will attempt to stop your forward progression by throwing a jab at your face. If you lunge at him with a straight jab, which keeps your head on your centerline, there is a good chance your opponent will land his counter jab. However, throwing a step-in overhand jab allows you to land your attack and slip his counter jab at the same time. In addition to this benefit, the level change involved in the step-in overhand can look like you're shooting in for a takedown, which will often cause your opponent to drop his hands in preparation to defend a shot. As his hands fall, you land clean to his face. Another benefit to the step-in overhand jab is that it puts you in good position to follow up with a right uppercut to either his body or head. I strongly recommend taking some time to perfect this technique because it makes your movements, attacks, and follow-up attacks less predictable. It's a very valuable tool, especially when you're up against a taller opponent who has a superior reach.



I'm in my fighting stance.



Driving off my right foot, I slide my left foot forward across the ground, extend my left arm straight out, and begin turning my left palm toward the ground.



Continuing to extend my left arm, I slightly rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, elevate my left elbow, turn my left hand so that my thumb is pointing toward the ground, drop my level by bending at the knees, and move my head by tilting toward my right side and bending at the waist.



### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: CHIN, NOSE, EYES, SOLAR PLEXUS.

\*You can generate power for the step-in overhand by rotating your hips and shoulders, but don't rotate them so much that you turn the punch into a hook. The majority of power should come from your forward momentum and the sideways turn of your hips and shoulders.

\*Avoid leaning too far to the side.

\*In order to maintain balance when throwing this punch, shift your weight onto your lead leg and bend at the waist.



## LEAD STEP-IN UPPER CUT

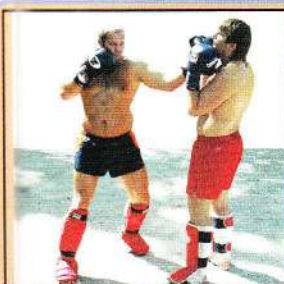
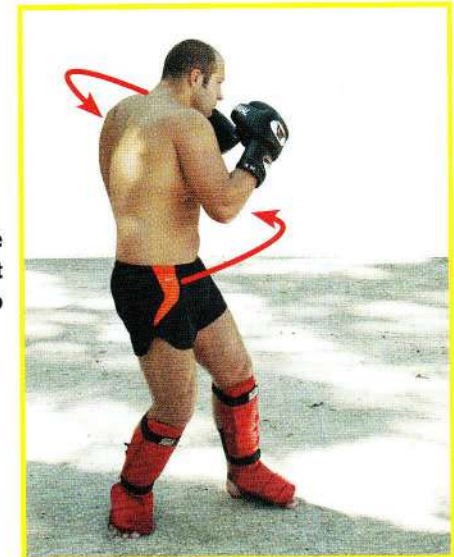
The uppercut is a very versatile punch because it can be executed from the clinch and from long range. In the sequence below, I demonstrate how to throw a lead step-in uppercut, which is best used as a long-range attack. Just like when throwing a lead power hook, I begin by rotating my body in the opposite direction of the punch. Again, this serves multiple purposes. It loads my hips, allows me to generate more power, and often leads my opponent to believe I'm about to throw a right cross. Whereas the overhand jab is a great counter to your opponent's left jab or left cross, the step-in uppercut is a great counter to your opponent's right jab or right cross. The loading of your hips makes it very easy to slip your opponent's right-handed punch, and then with a quick snap of your hips, you capitalize on his compromised positioning by delivering a powerful left uppercut. It's also a good strike to begin an attack with because most opponents will expect you to lead with a linear strike such as a jab. When you begin with upward attack, it often catches them off guard and increases your chances of landing both your first strike and your follow-up strikes.



I'm in my fighting stance.



I turn my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction. Not only does this spring-load my hips, but it also tricks my opponent into thinking I am about to throw a right cross.



### KEY CONCEPTS

**PRIMARY TARGETS:** CHIN, NOSE, EYES, SOLAR PLEXUS.

\*It doesn't matter if you're utilizing the uppercut as a long-range or short-range attack, or whether you're targeting your opponent's head or body—the dynamics of the technique remain the same. The only differences will be whether or not you utilize a step, the extension of your arm, and where you direct the punch.

\*Because it's a straight punch, use your forward momentum to generate speed and power instead of dramatically rotating your hips and shoulders.







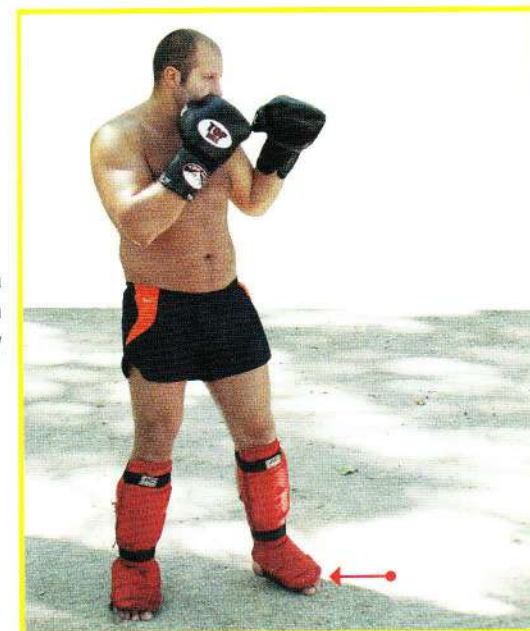
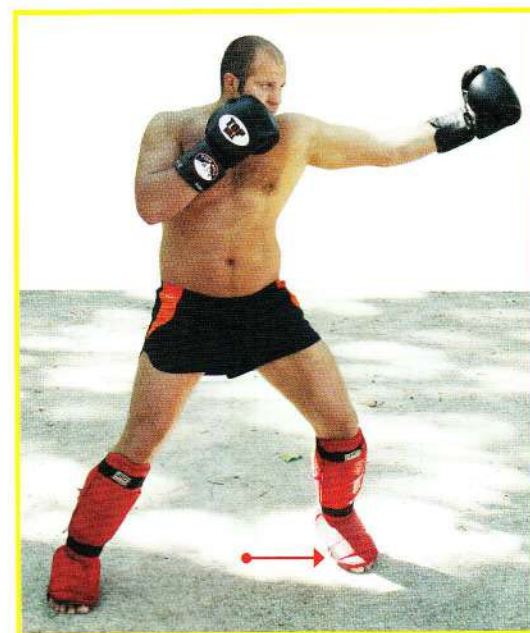
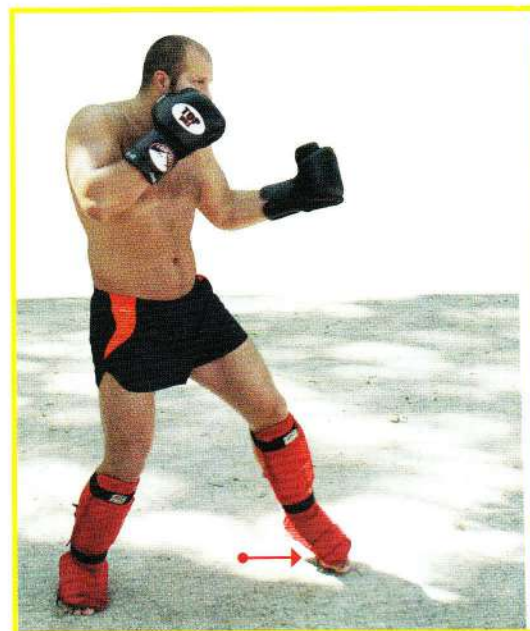
Driving off my right foot, I slide my left foot forward and corkscrew my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction. At the same time, I drop my left hand.



Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I plant my left foot on the ground, extend my left arm, and turn my left hand over so that my palm is facing upward at a forty-five-degree angle. Not only does this allow me to maximize the distance I can cover with the punch, but it also ensures that the knuckles of my index and middle fingers make contact with the target.



Rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I pull my left arm back toward my body and reestablish my fighting stance.



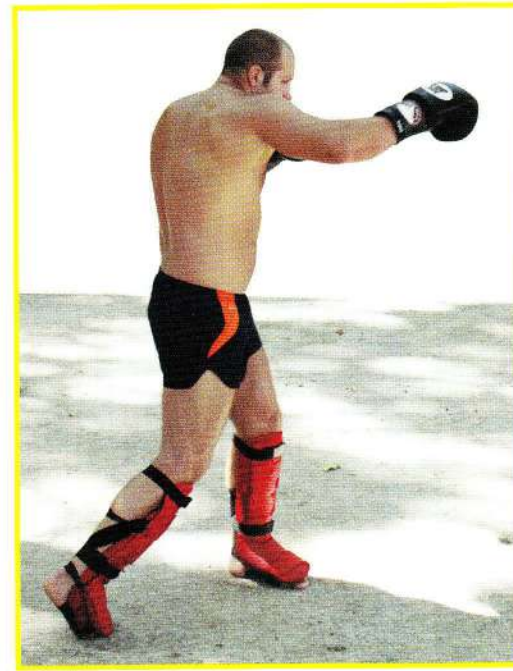
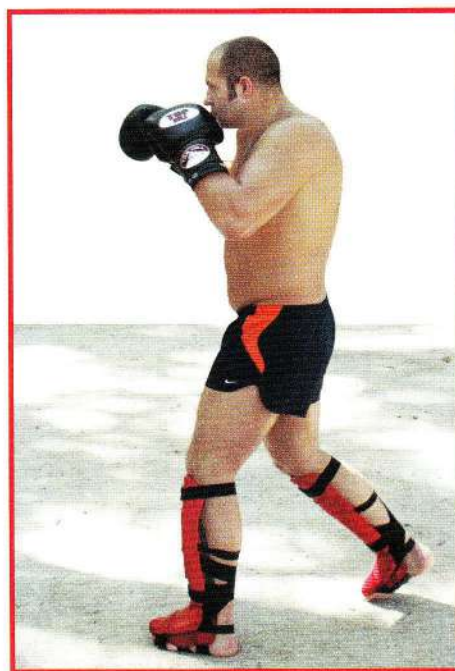
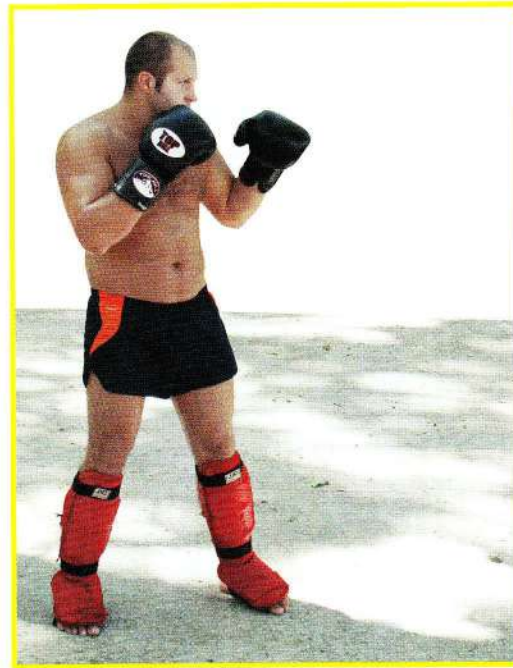
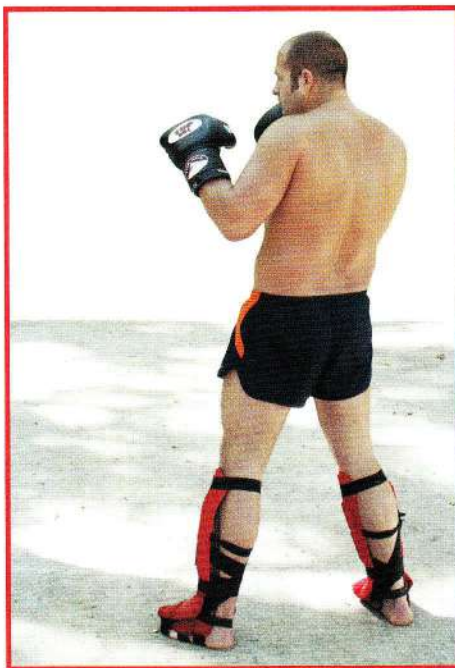


## STRAIGHT CROSS

The straight cross has knockout power, but because it is a rear-handed attack, it has more distance to cover, making it easier for your opponent to spot. For this reason, it's best set up off a lead punch such as a jab, hook, or uppercut. It can also serve as a good counter for almost any punch. For example, I'll often throw a cross immediately after checking one of my opponent's low kicks. With many opponents having the bad habit of dropping their hands when they throw a kick, I land the punch a large percentage of the time. The cross I demonstrate in the sequence below is best utilized when your opponent is in punching range. If he is outside of punching range, you'll want to utilize the long cross, which I demonstrate in the following sequence.

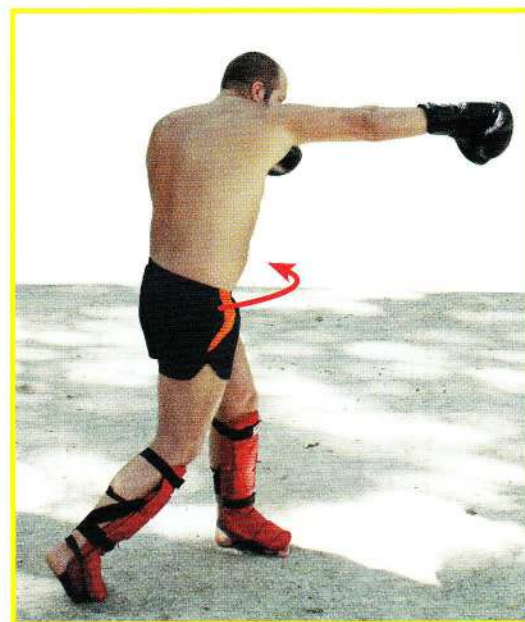
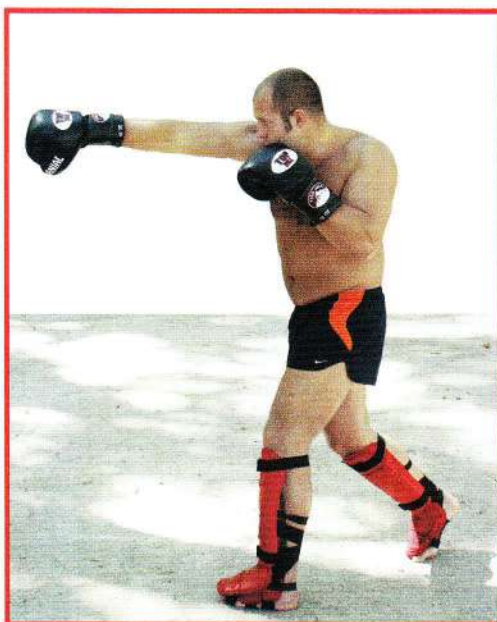


I'm in my fighting stance.

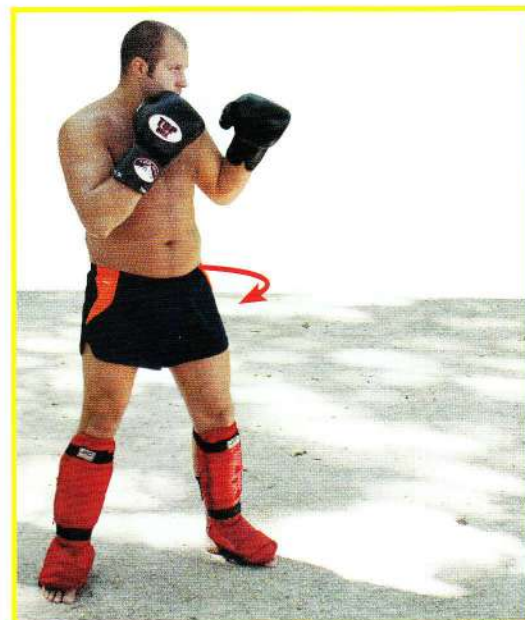
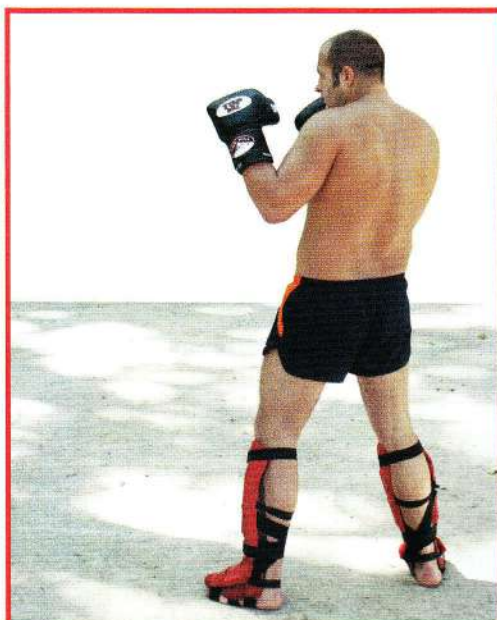


Distributing a larger portion of my weight onto my left foot, I come up onto the ball of my right foot, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw my right arm straight out. As my arm extends, I begin turning my palm toward the ground. It is important to notice that my right arm is tucked to my side. If you let your elbow drift out as you extend your arm, you will lose the energy generated by your legs and hips and your punch won't be as powerful.





Straightening my right arm, I continue to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction. As my right elbow locks out, I complete the rotation of my hand and clench my fist tight. Having stayed relaxed, my fist snaps into my target at the end of my extension. Notice that the thumb of my right hand is now pointing toward the ground on my left at a forty-five-degree angle. Not only does this maximize the distance I can cover with the punch, but it also allows me to strike my target with the knuckles of my index and middle fingers.



Rotating my body in a clockwise direction, I pull my right arm back and reestablish my fighting stance.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

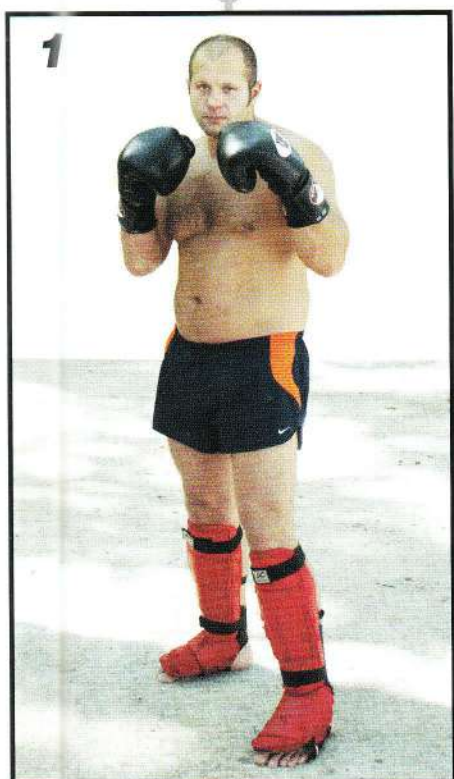
PRIMARY TARGETS: CHIN, NOSE, EYES, SOLAR PLEXUS.

- \*With the cross, it is important to keep your punching arm straight. If you let your elbow flare out to the side, you'll lose the momentum and power generated by your hips and legs.
- \*Don't lean forward in an attempt to generate more power. Leaning forward will not only throw you off balance, but it will also turn the impact of your punch into a push rather than a jarring blow.
- \*If you're throwing the cross with your right hand, your right shoulder should go forward and your left shoulder should go back. This will help whip your hips in a circular direction and add power and speed to your punch.
- \*To keep from over-rotating your hips, do not change the angle of your lead foot as you throw the punch. See photos 1, 2, and 3.



## LONG CROSS

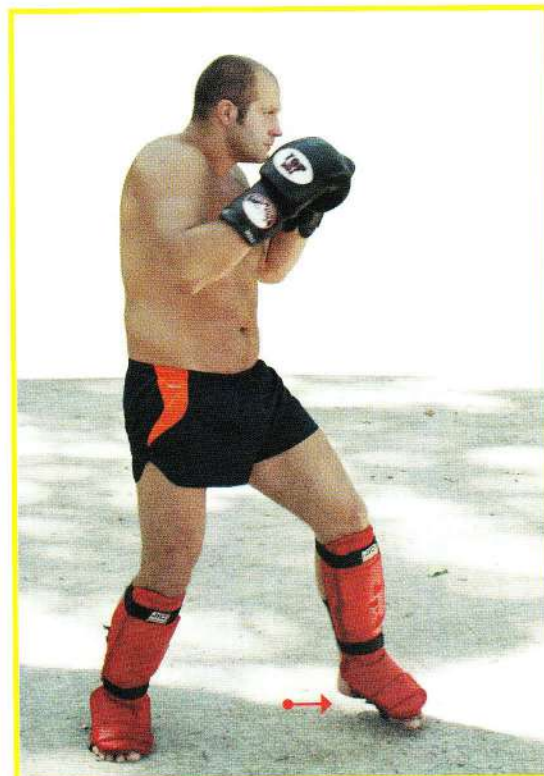
The long cross is best utilized when you need to cover a large amount of distance in order to connect with your target. Personally, I use the long cross in a couple of scenarios. The first is when I'm in the middle of a combination and my opponent steps out of punching range. Unable to hit him with the traditional straight cross, I'll lunge forward with a long cross. Other times, I throw the long cross without setting it up. The majority of the time your opponent will expect you to throw a strike with your lead hand when you lunge forward, so when you throw a strike with your rear hand, you can sometimes throw him off. Even if he manages to block or evade the punch, the long cross will usually put you in a good position to follow up with a lead hook.



I'm in my fighting stance.



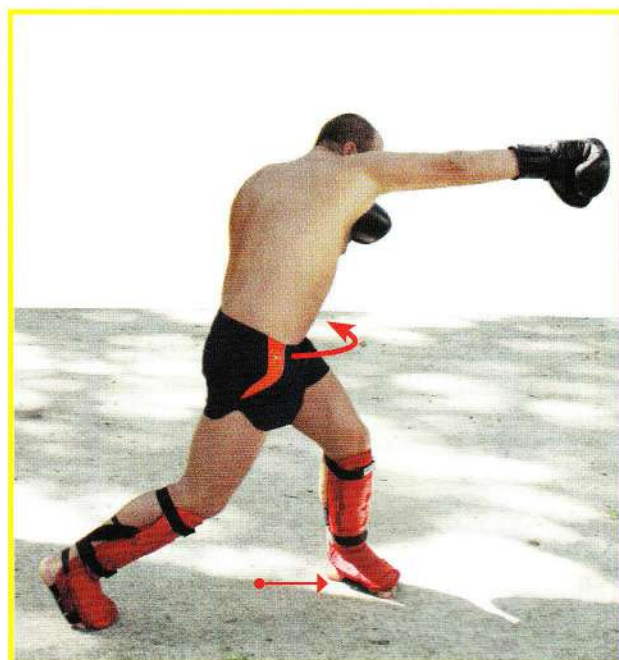
Driving off my right foot, I step my left foot forward, rotate my hips in counterclockwise direction, pull my left shoulder back, and extend my right arm. As my arm straightens, I begin turning my fist over so that my palm is facing the ground.



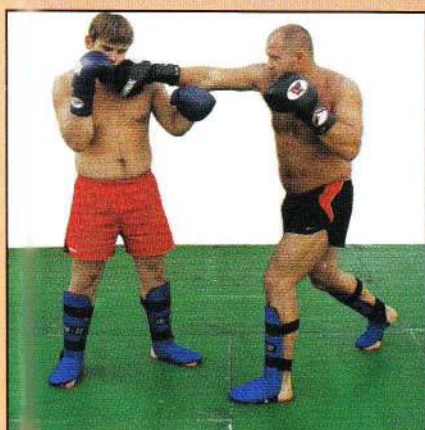
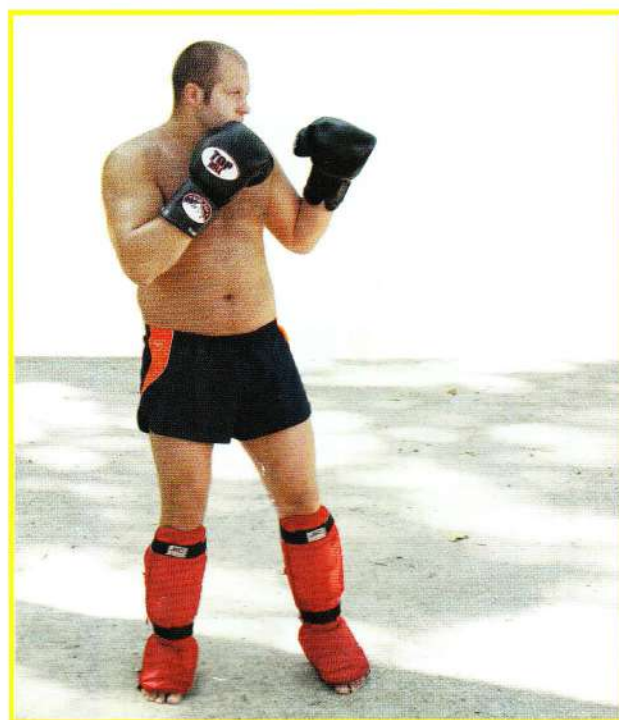




I continue to turn my hips in a counterclockwise direction and pull my left shoulder back. As my right arm straightens and my elbow locks, I complete the rotation of my hand. Notice how my thumb is now pointing at a forty-five-degree angle toward the ground on my right, and how my actions have forced my right shoulder upward to protect the right side of my face.



I rotate my hips in a clockwise direction, pull my hand back, and reestablish my fighting stance.



### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: CHIN, NOSE, EYES, SOLAR PLEXUS.

\*The long cross is a tricky punch because you have to lunge forward and turn your hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction at the same time. To accomplish this, push off your back leg, and then as you come forward quickly pivot on the ball of your foot.

\*If you're throwing the cross with your right hand, your right shoulder should move forward and your left shoulder should move back. This will help whip your hips in a circular direction and add power and speed to your punch.

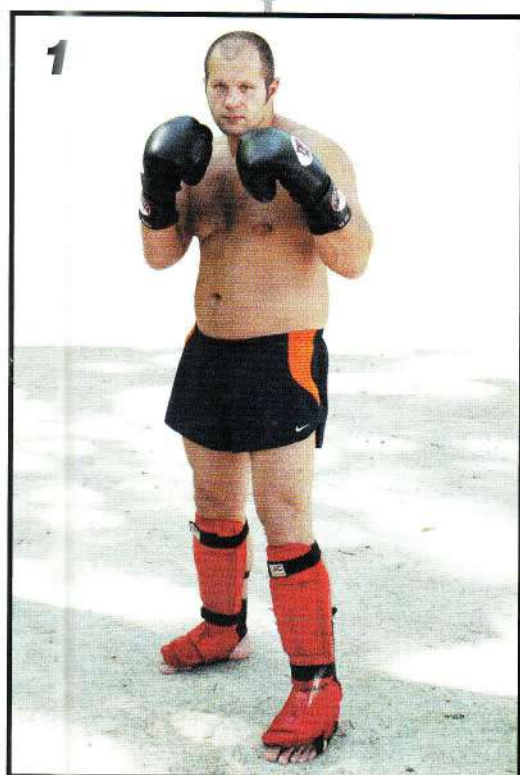
\*Fully extend your arm when utilizing this technique. A lot of fighters will leap forward, land in their new position, and then throw the cross. Personally, I like to throw the cross as I leap forward because my momentum packs more power into the punch.

\*Because this is a long-range strike, your base will get spread out more than usual. To prevent your opponent from capitalizing on your positioning, reestablish your stance or move on to your next attack immediately after connecting with your target.

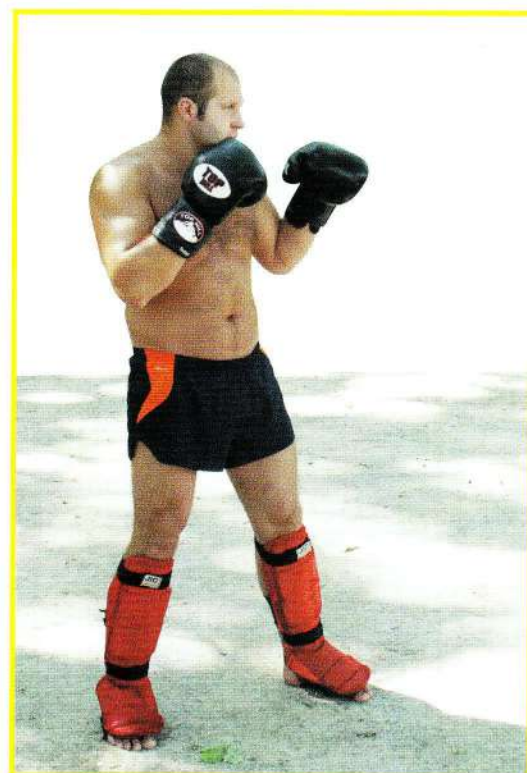


## RIGHT HOOK

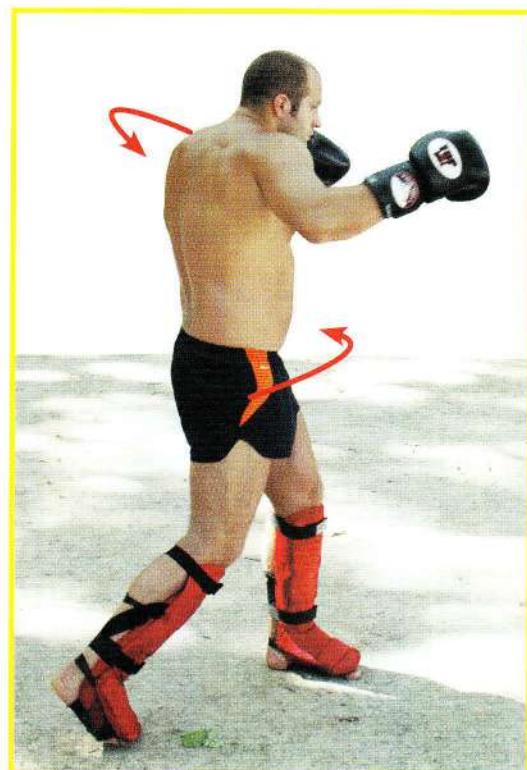
The right hook can be used as an attack, a counter, or as a follow-up technique after another strike. When using it as an attack, I will usually throw it after a jab or a lead hook because both prime my hips perfectly for the right cross. As a counter, I'll generally use it after slipping a left jab or a left cross for the same reason. In the sequence below, I demonstrate how to throw the right hook from your stance, which comes in handy when you're fighting in close range with your opponent. If he is outside of punching range, you'll want to utilize the step-in right hook, which I cover next.



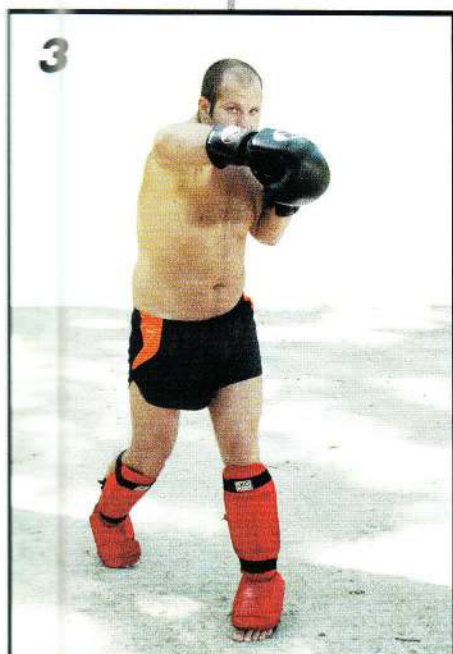
I'm in my fighting stance.



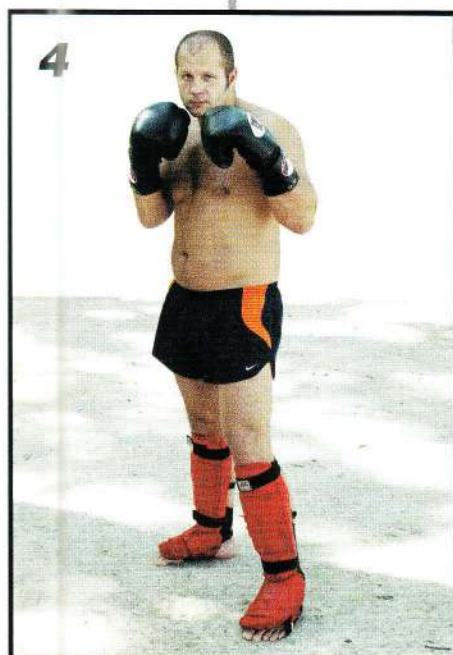
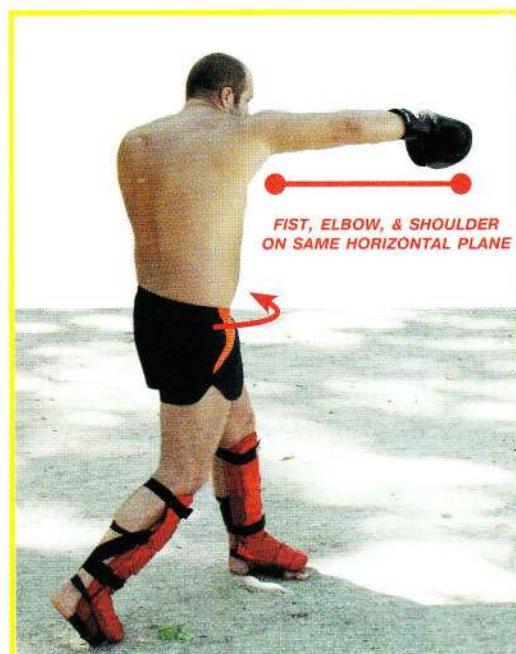
Distributing a larger percentage of my weight on my lead leg, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, come up onto the ball of my right foot, and throw my right hand forward. It is important to notice that as I thrust my right shoulder forward, I pull my left shoulder back. Not only does this help propel my right arm outward, but it also lifts my right shoulder upward to protect my chin.







Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I extend my right arm farther forward and turn my hand over so that my palm is facing the ground. Because I'm drawing my left shoulder back and turning my hips, the path of my right fist is a lateral arch. Notice how my shoulder, elbow, and fist are all aligned on the same horizontal plane. This allows the energy generated by my legs and hips to be transferred through my arm and into the target.



I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pull my arm back, and reestablish my fighting stance.



### KEY CONCEPTS

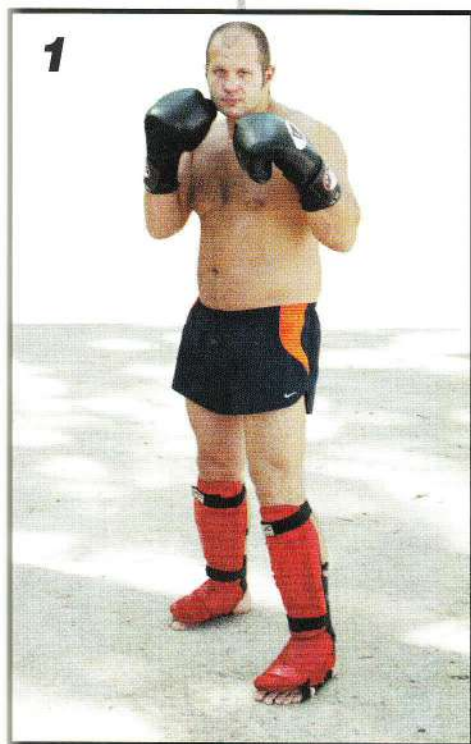
PRIMARY TARGETS: JAW, TEMPLE, SIDE OF NECK.

- \*Rotate both your hips and shoulders as you step forward.
- \*To generate more power, pull your lead shoulder back as you pivot your hips.
- \*Do not drop your nonstriking hand in an attempt to generate more speed and power for the hook. If you drop your hand and your opponent counters with a hook of his own or a high kick, it can be a recipe for disaster.
- \*Before throwing the hook, spring-loading your hips by turning them in the opposite direction of the strike can generate more power, but it telegraphs your intentions. To avoid this, spring-load your hips by throwing a lead hook, uppercut, jab, or by slipping one of your opponent punches. It will allow you to generate knockout power in your hook, but without telegraphing it.
- \*Do not overcommit to this punch because it will compromise your positioning should you miss. With this strike, you want to visualize hitting your target rather than punching through your target because it allows for a quick recovery. To keep from over-rotating your hips, do not change the angle of your lead foot when you throw the punch. See photos 1, 2, and 3.
- \*When you connect with your target, your shoulder, elbow, and fist should be aligned on the same horizontal plane. This ensures that the momentum generated by your legs and hips gets transferred through your arm and into your target. If your body is out of alignment, the power from your core will be lost, turning your hook into a punch thrown from your shoulder.

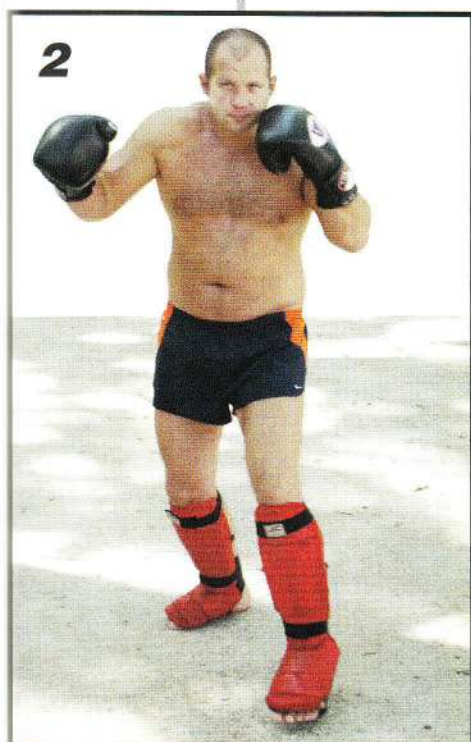
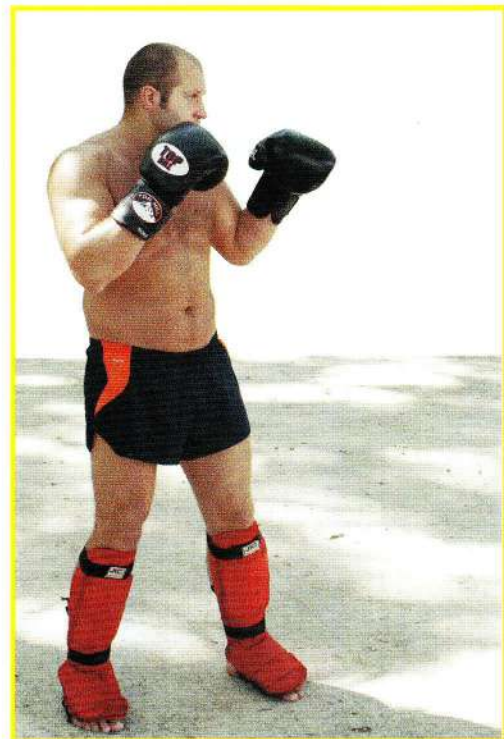


## STEP-IN RIGHT HOOK

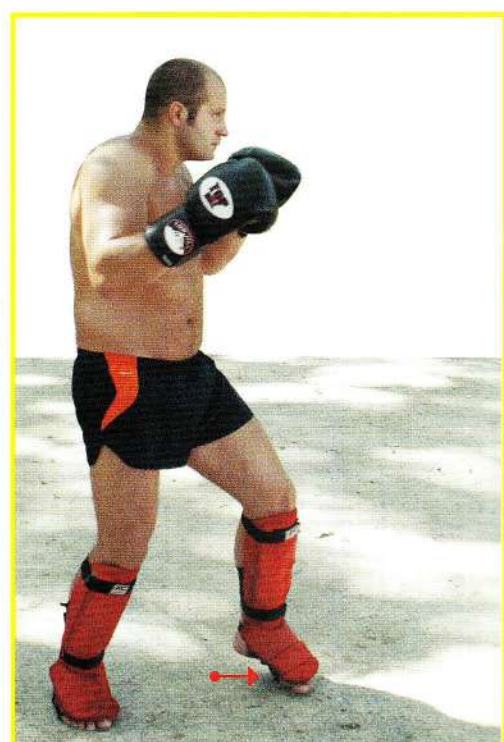
There are several situations in which the step-in right hook works especially well. The first is when you throw it immediately after a jab. Many opponents will expect you to throw the traditional right cross after the jab, and when you switch things up and throw the right hook instead, it will often sneak past their defenses. It's also highly effective when you use it to close the distance, but for different reasons. Due to the power the punch possesses, your opponent will be forced to react by elevating his arms to protect his face, which in turn creates an opportunity to tie him up in the clinch, execute a takedown, or follow up with more strikes to the lower portion of his body. Another time the right hook proves beneficial is immediately after breaking from the clinch, which is when a lot of opponents tend to drop their hands for a brief moment. While they are focused on reestablishing their posture, you step in and land a knockout blow.



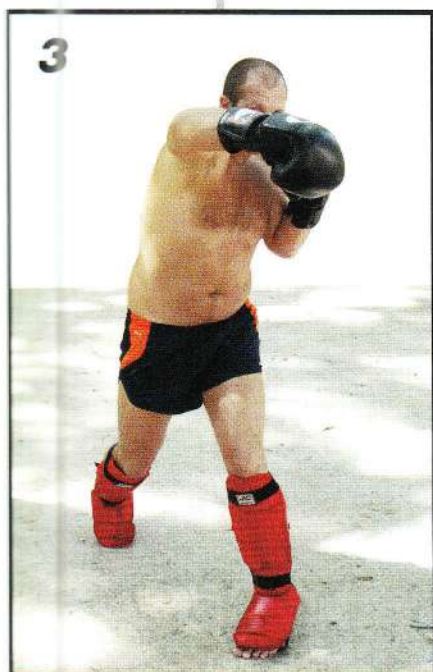
I'm in my fighting stance.



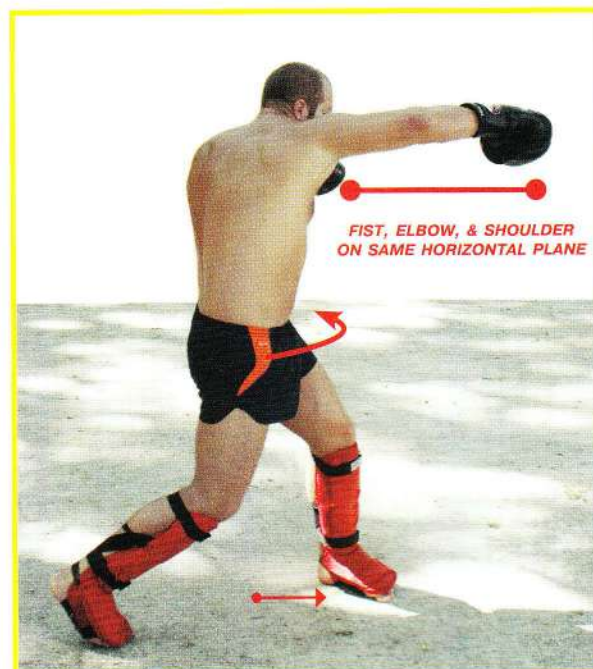
Driving off my right foot, I step my left foot forward and rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction. To help propel my right hand outward, I pull my left shoulder back and I drive my right shoulder forward.



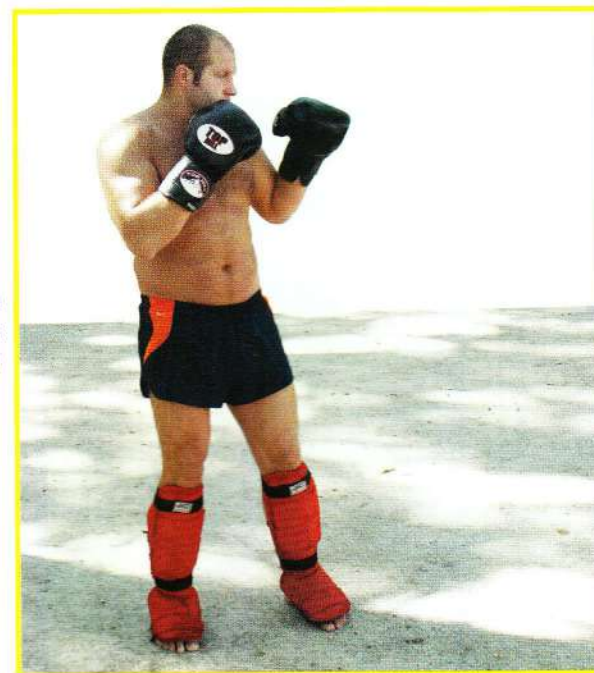




Planting my left foot on the ground, I continue to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, pull my left shoulder back, and extend my right arm. As my arm shoots forward on a horizontal arch, I turn my right hand over so that my thumb is pointing at a forty-five-degree angle toward the ground to my left. Notice how my shoulder, elbow, and fist are all aligned on the same horizontal plane. This allows the energy generated by my legs and hips to be transmitted through my arm and into the target.



I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pull my right arm back, and reestablish my fighting stance.



### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: **JAW, CHIN, TEMPLE.**

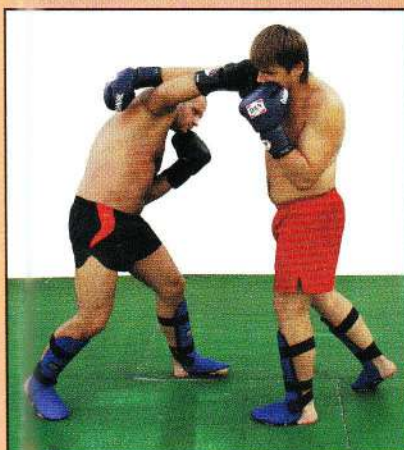
\*When you connect with your target, your shoulder, elbow, and fist should be aligned on the same horizontal plane. This ensures that the momentum generated by your legs and hips gets transmitted through your arm and into your target. If your body is out of alignment, the power from your core will be lost, turning your hook into a punch thrown from your shoulder.

\*Rotate your hips and shoulders as you step forward.

\*To generate more power, pull your lead shoulder back as you rotate your hips.

\*Do not lean too far to the side when throwing the punch because it will throw you off balance. Not only will this jeopardize your positioning, but it will also reduce the power and accuracy of your punch.

\*The step-in power hook is not a haymaker. Finish your punch along your opponent's centerline. If you follow through with your punch and miss, the momentum will spin you around and put you in a compromising position. To prevent this from happening, keep your lead foot angled inward as you throw the punch. See photo 3.



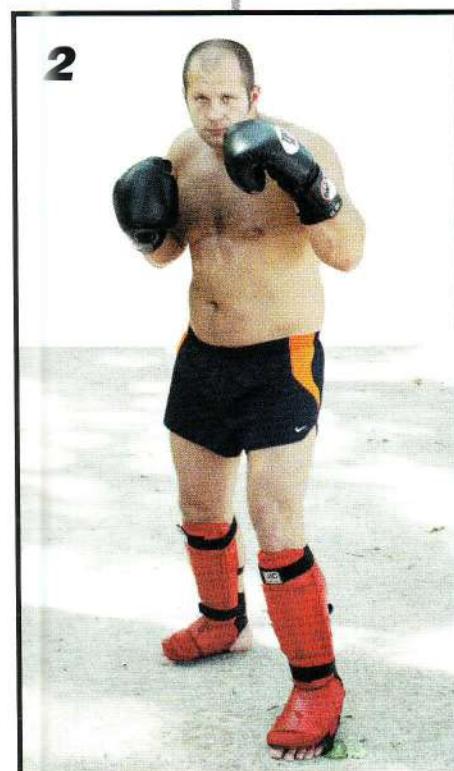


## RIGHT UPPERCUT

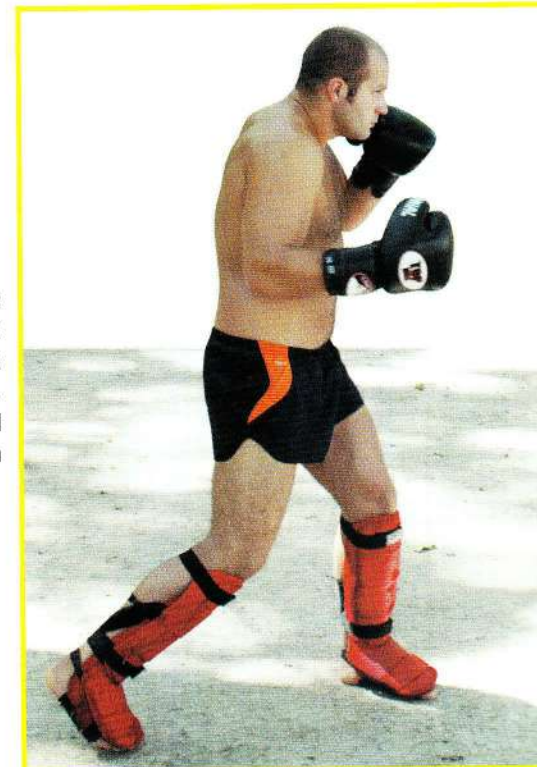
The right uppercut is a devastating punch when delivered at the right moment. In the sequence below, I demonstrate how to throw it directly from your stance. To generate more power, you can also begin the strike by dipping your body in the opposite direction. I will do this in two scenarios—immediately after I slip my opponent's jab or when he is in close range and I just landed a left hook. I'll demonstrate both of these techniques later on in the book, but first it is important that you get down the basic movements. To learn how to cover distance with the right uppercut, see the next sequence in this section.



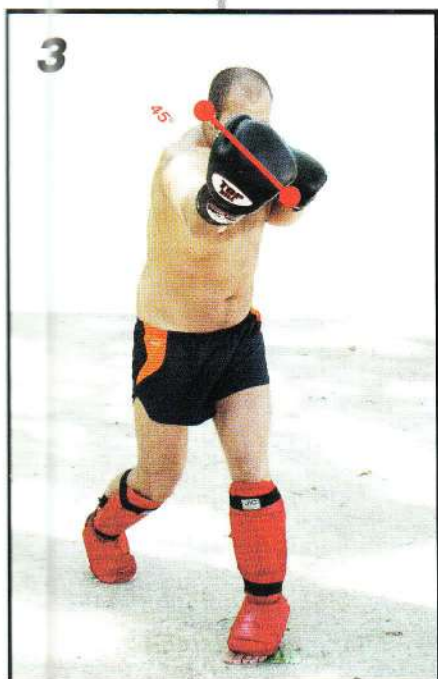
I'm in my fighting stance.



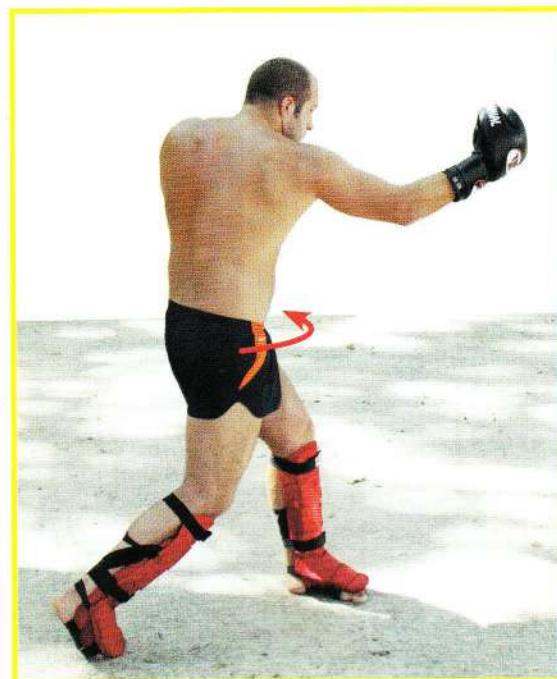
Distributing a larger portion of my weight onto my lead leg, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and come up onto the ball of my right foot. As I thrust my right shoulder forward, I slightly lower my right hand to acquire an upward line of attack for the punch.







Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I extend my right arm in an upward arch. As my arm straightens, I rotate my hand so that my thumb is pointing at a forty-five-degree angle toward the sky to my right.



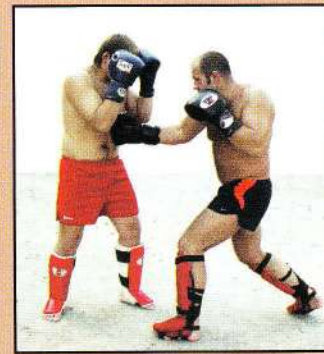
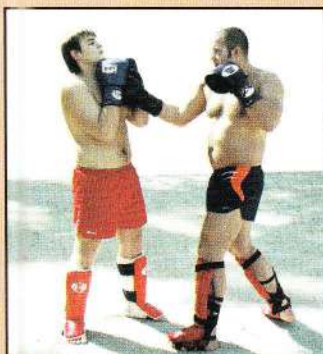
I rotate my body in a clockwise direction, pull my right arm back, and reestablish my fighting stance.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: CHIN, NOSE, SOLAR PLEXUS, ADBOMEN.

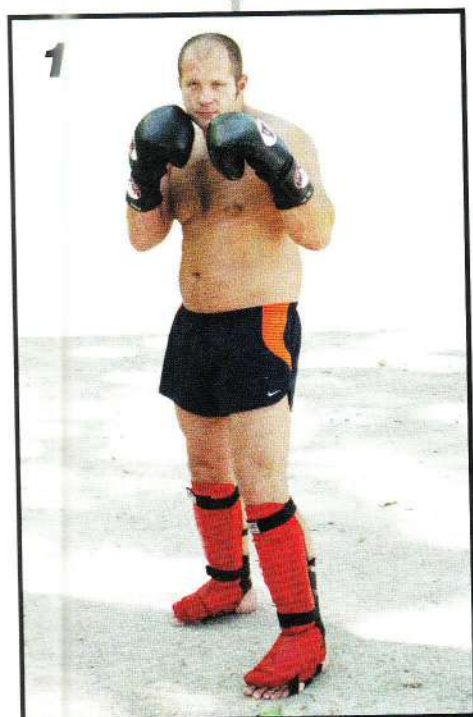
\*It doesn't matter whether your opponent is in close range, long range, or you're attacking his body—the mechanics of the right uppercut remains the same. The main difference will be in the extension of your arm. If your opponent is in close, drive your arm more upward than outward. If he is farther away, extend your arm more outward.



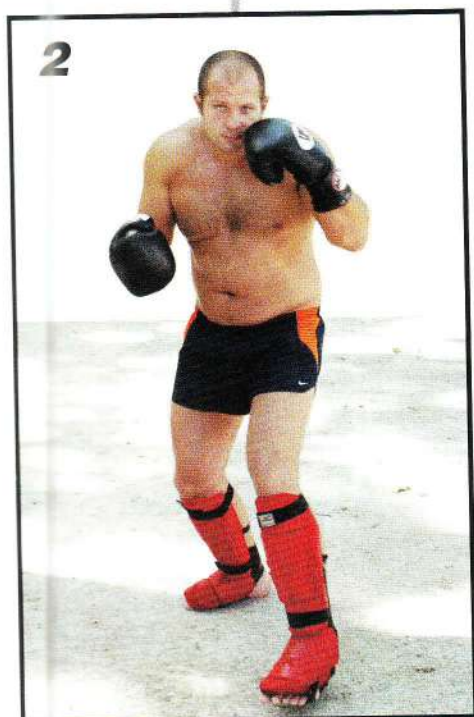


## RIGHT STEP-IN UPPERCUT

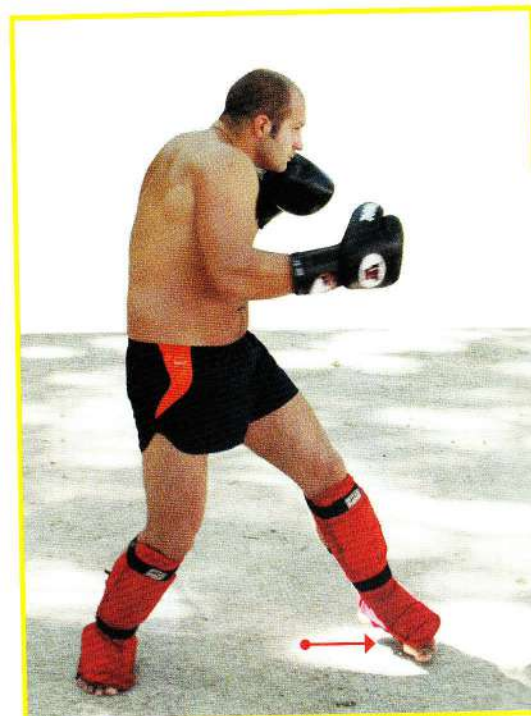
It is important to always keep your opponent guessing, and an excellent way to do that is to step toward him and throw a right uppercut. Most opponents will expect a jab or cross or hook—few will expect a right uppercut. Even if he should block your strike, you just informed him that he has to worry about more than the traditional combinations. One of two things will usually come of this—either he will ignore your unorthodox strikes and continue to look out for the usual combinations, in which case you'll eventually land that one sneaky shot that puts him down, or he will be on the lookout for every strike imaginable, which stretches his focus thin and makes your traditional combinations more effective. If you look at the photos in the sequence below, you'll notice that I throw this punch differently than most boxers. Instead of coming straight up with the punch, I extend my arm outward and rotate my hand so that my palm is pointing toward the sky. I've found throwing the right uppercut in this fashion not only allows me to land more often, but also generates more power.



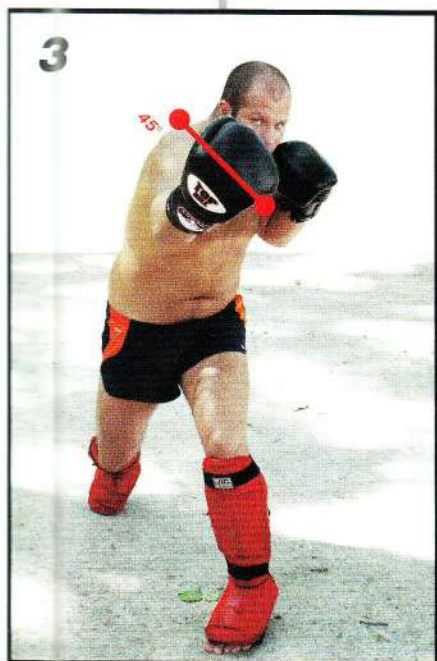
I'm in my fighting stance.



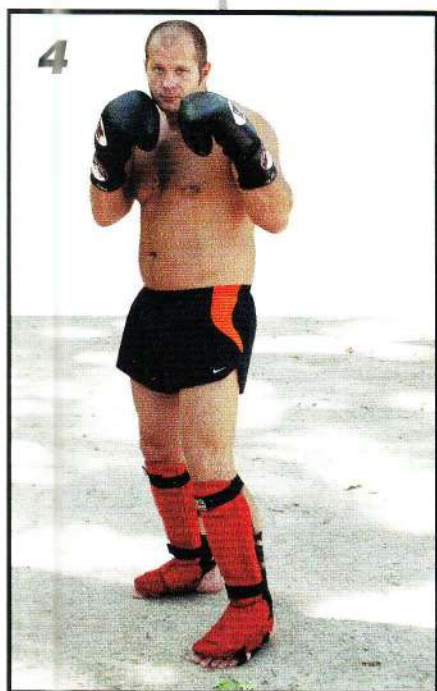
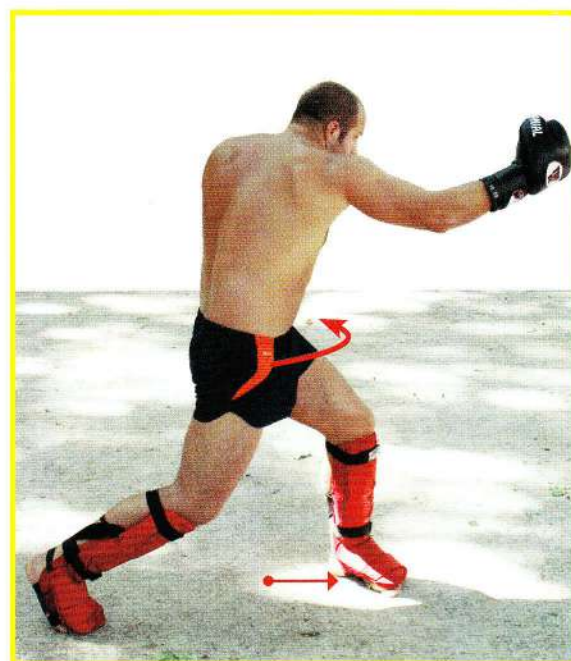
I drive off my right foot, slide my left foot forward, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and slightly lower my right hand to acquire an upward angle of attack for the punch.



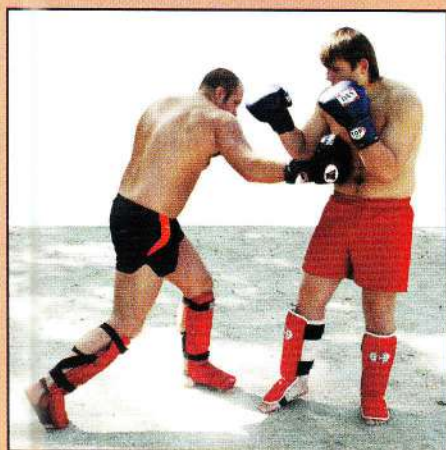
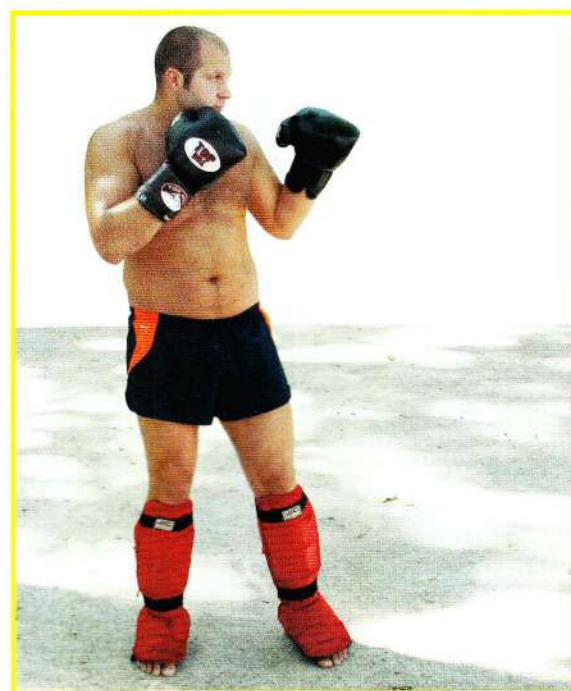




Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I plant my left foot on the ground, extend my right arm along an upward trajectory, and rotate my hand so that my palm is facing upward.



I rotate my body in a clockwise direction, draw my right hand back, and reestablish my fighting stance.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

PRIMARY TARGETS: CHIN, NOSE, SOLAR PLEXUS.

\*As you extend your arm outward, rotate your hand so that your palm is facing upward.

\*Whether you're targeting your opponent's head or body, the mechanics of the punch remain the same. The only difference will be how you angle your extended arm.

\*The right step-in uppercut is a long-range strike, so it will spread your stance out a little more than usual. To prevent your opponent from capitalizing on your footing, immediately reestablish your stance or move on to your next punch after connecting with your target.



## RIGHT OUTSIDE LOW KICK

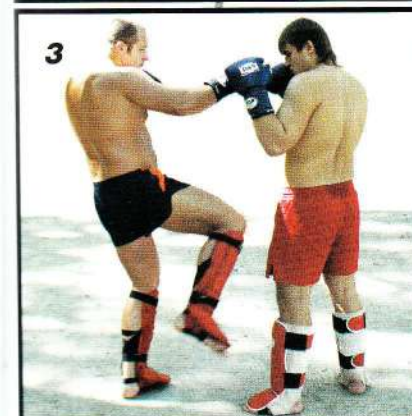
Delivering a round kick to the sciatic nerve running down the outside of your opponent's lead leg is an excellent way to cause damage. Most of the time that damage isn't visible. Your opponent will usually suck up the pain and continue on fighting as though nothing happened. If not for the slight red mark caused by the kick, you'd think you caused no harm at all. However, after landing half a dozen of these kicks over the course of a fight, the damage will become more noticeable. If your kicks are powerful, your opponent will most likely begin hobbling toward you on a locked lead leg. It's possible to beat your opponent's legs to the point that he can no longer stand, but the majority of the time you won't win a fight with leg kicks alone. What they'll do for you is seriously hinder your opponent's offense and defense. Having to keep his leg straight to prevent it from collapsing, he can no longer shoot in for a takedown, advance with a lightning quick combination, or execute a speedy retreat from your attacks. He essentially becomes a punching bag. The reason more competitors don't utilize leg kicks is because they can be difficult to land, and they can also make you vulnerable to counterstrikes and takedowns. To prevent either from happening, it is very important to use setups. When executing a leg kick as an attack, it is best to lead with some type of punch such as a jab or a hook. In addition to spring-loading your hips for the kick, the punch will also pull your opponent's focus away from the lower half of his body, which allows you to sneak the kick past his guard. When countering with a leg kick, you've also got to have the right timing. The best time to throw it is immediately after slipping one of your opponent's punches or checking one of his kicks because he won't be in a position to counter your kick. The one time you don't want to throw the low kick is when your opponent is advancing toward you in a correct fighting stance. Is it possible to land a low kick and get away scot-free in such a situation? Sure. But it is also possible to eat a solid right cross to the face. If you're eager to throw the low kick but don't want to set it up, it's best to wait until your opponent is backing away because it will be difficult for him to fire back at you.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



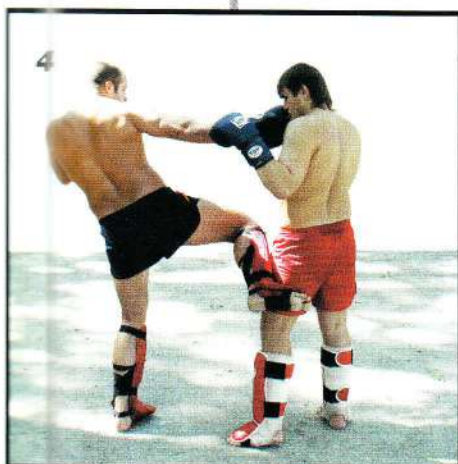
I step my left foot forward and slightly to my left. In this case, my step is small because Kirill is within kicking range. If he were outside of kicking range, I would need to take a longer step. It is important to notice the angle of my foot when I plant it on the ground. Instead of pointing my toes forward, I've pointed them at a forty-five-degree angle to my left. This opens my hips and will allow me to generate more power behind the kick.



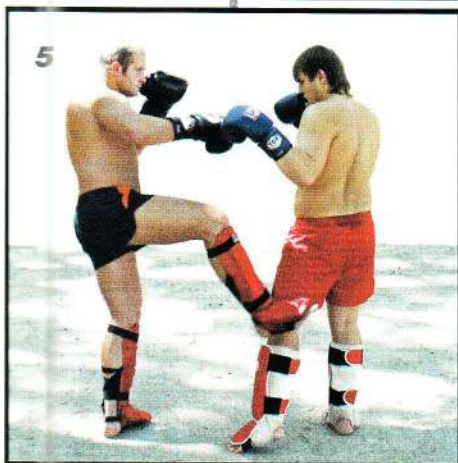
Keeping my left hand up to protect my face, I pull my left shoulder back, push off my right foot, and thrust my right hip forward. These actions whip my right leg off the ground toward Kirill's left thigh. To maintain distance and protect myself from possible counter strikes, I extend my right arm in the direction of Kirill's torso.



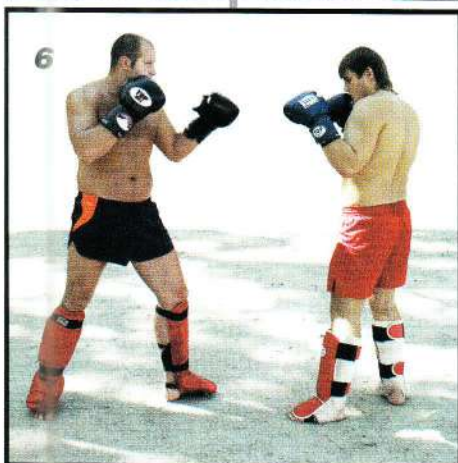




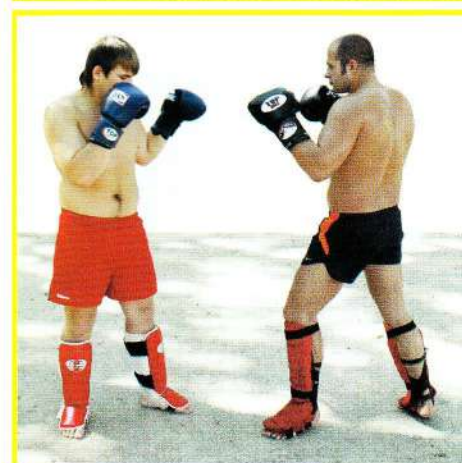
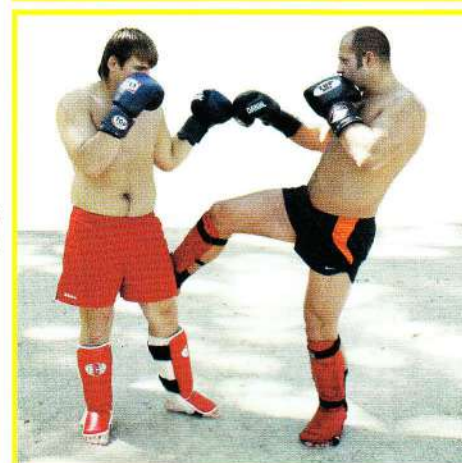
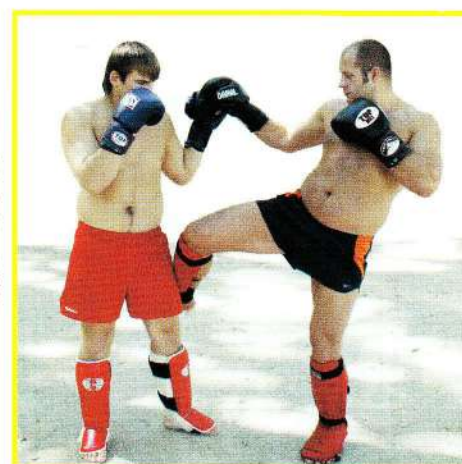
Continuing to pull my left shoulder back and thrust my right hip forward, my leg whips into the sciatic nerve running down the outside of Kirill's thigh. Notice that I'm connecting with the side of my shinbone rather than the front of it.



As I let my right leg rebound off of Kirill's thigh, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction.



I reestablish my fighting stance.



### KEY CONCEPTS

**PRIMARY TARGETS:** The target zones for this kick will differ depending on the stance that you and your opponent have. If you both are in a standard stance with your left leg forward then you'll target the outside of his thigh along the sciatic nerve. If you're standing in opposite stance to that of your opponent, you'll target the inside of his thigh just above his knee.

\*I throw the low round kick differently than most. Many Thai boxers begin the kick by whipping their hips circularly, which pulls their kicking leg off the mat and allows them to make contact with the sharp bone running down the front of their shin. Although this is an excellent kick that can cause a lot of damage, it will turn your back to your opponent should you miss, which in MMA makes you vulnerable to a takedown. To prevent this from happening, I thrust my hips forward instead of circularly. The motion of my hips pulls my leg off the ground just the same, but instead of connecting with the front of my shin, I'll connect with the inside of my shin. I've found kicking this way is quicker, produces an ample amount of power, and allows for a speedier recovery, especially when you miss the kick.

\*Keep your posture straight and erect. Leaning to one side or the other will not only reduce the power of your kick, but it will also slow your recovery.

\*The right cross is kryptonite to the round kick. To prevent getting nailed, protect your face with your left hand and keep your right arm extended to maintain distance between you and your opponent.

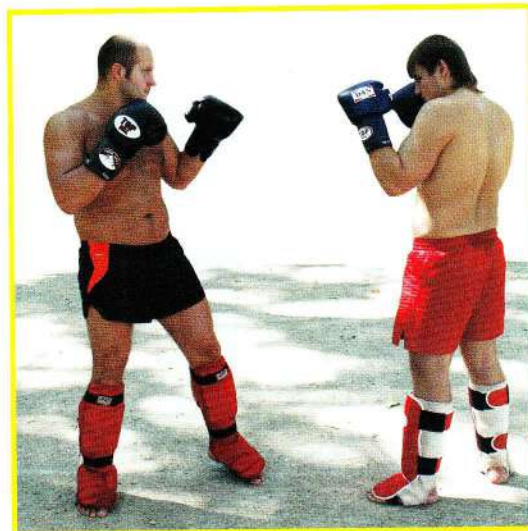


## RIGHT OUTSIDE MID KICK

The right outside mid kick has the power to shatter your opponent's ribs, but it is a very risky kick to throw in MMA because it is easy for your opponent to catch. Once he has your leg secured, he can do all sorts of nasty stuff, such as kicking your leg out from underneath you or dragging you down to your back. To prevent from getting caught in such a compromising position, the best time to utilize this kick is after throwing a punch or a series of punches to your opponent's face. The more punches you throw, the more his focus will stray to the top portion of his body, allowing you to quickly deliver the round kick to his ribs or liver. In the striking attacks section of this book I demonstrate several setups for this kick, but for now it is important that you learn the proper form. As with the previous kick, my form is a little different than most MMA fighters and Thai boxers.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



I step my left foot forward and slightly to my left. In this case, my step is small because Kirill is within kicking range. If he were outside of kicking range, I would need to take a longer step. It is important to notice the angle of my foot when I plant it on the ground. Instead of pointing my toes forward, I've pointed them at a forty-five-degree angle to my left. This opens my hips and will allow me to generate more power behind the kick.



### KEY CONCEPTS

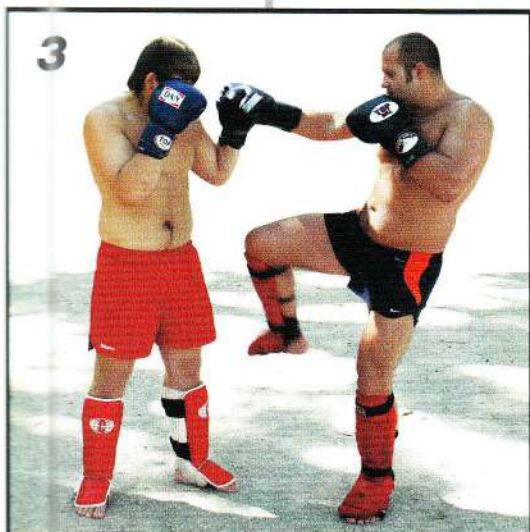
**PRIMARY TARGETS:** The target zones for this kick will differ depending on the stance that you and your opponent have. If you both are in a standard stance with your left leg forward then you'll target the soft tissue of his oblique located between his ribcage and hip. If you're standing in opposite stance to that of your opponent, then you'll target his abdomen.

\* Always set this kick up with punches to avoid counter attacks.

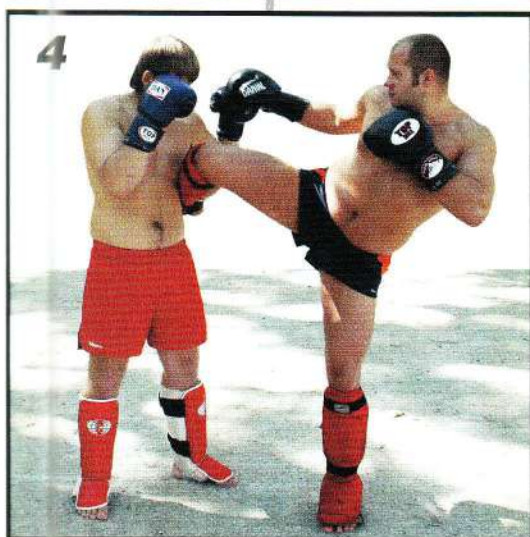
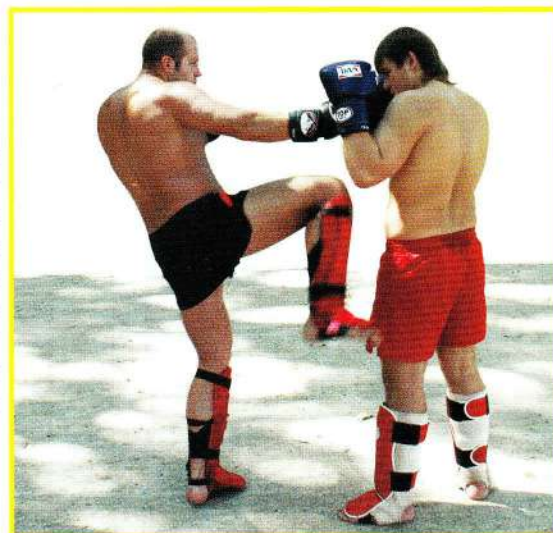
\* Keep your posture straight and erect. Leaning to one side or the other will not only reduce your kick's power, but it will also slow your recovery.

\* Remember that your opponent's best counter to round kicks is to throw the right cross. To prevent from getting hit, keep your left hand up to protect your face and extend your right arm to maintain distance between you and your opponent.

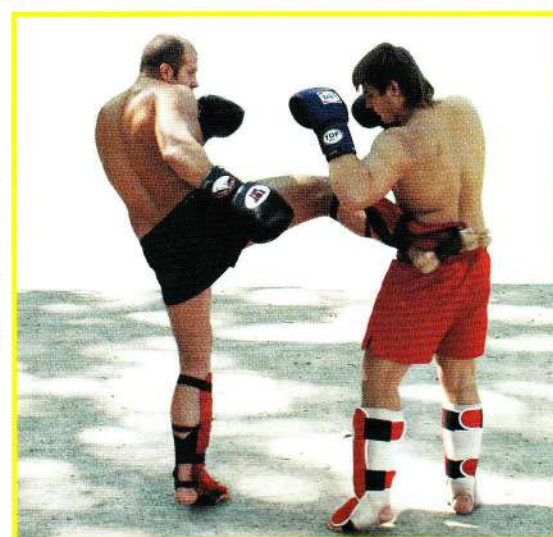




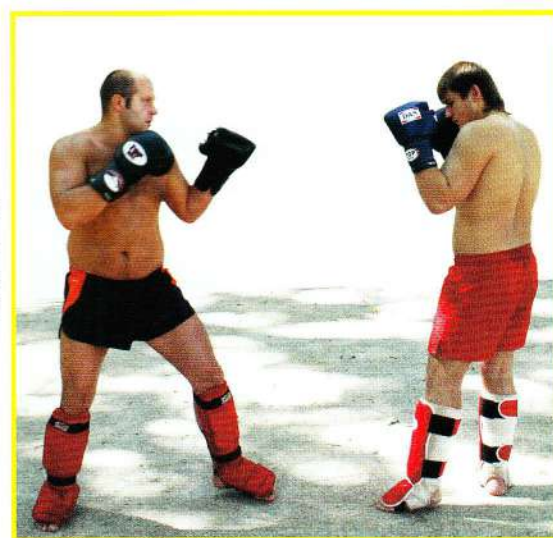
Keeping my left hand up to protect my face, I push off the ball of my right foot, pull my left shoulder back, and thrust my right hip forward. These actions whip my right leg off the mat toward Kirill's midsection. Notice how I've extended my right arm outward to maintain distance and guard myself from potential counterattacks.



Still pulling my left shoulder back and thrusting my right hip forward, my right shin collides into the soft flesh between Kirill's ribcage and hipbone, sending a shock wave through his unprotected organs.



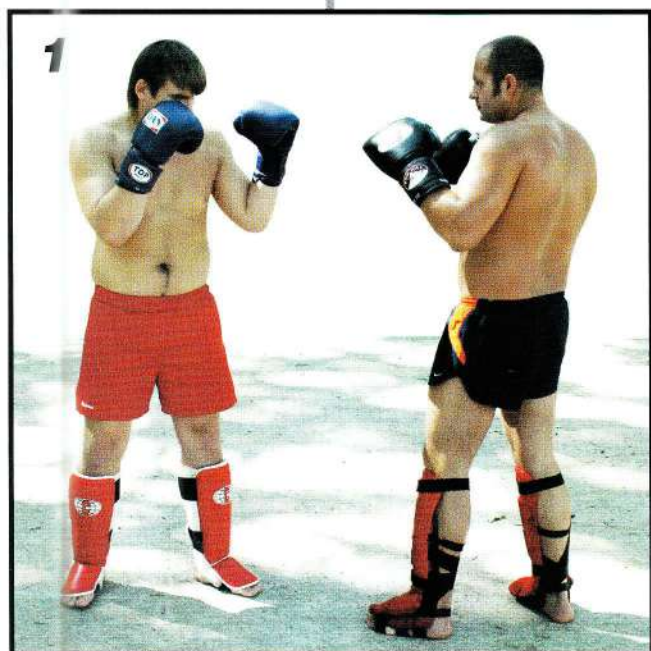
Letting my right leg rebound off Kirill's body, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pull my leg back, and reestablish my fighting stance.



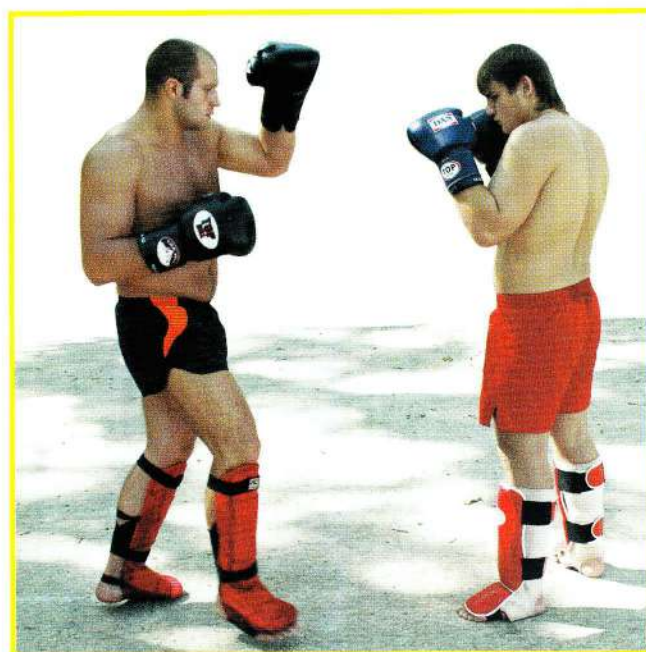
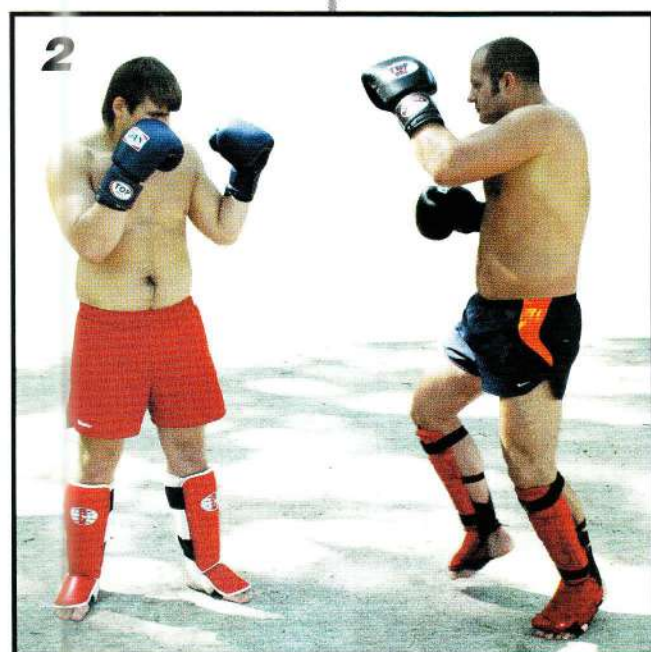
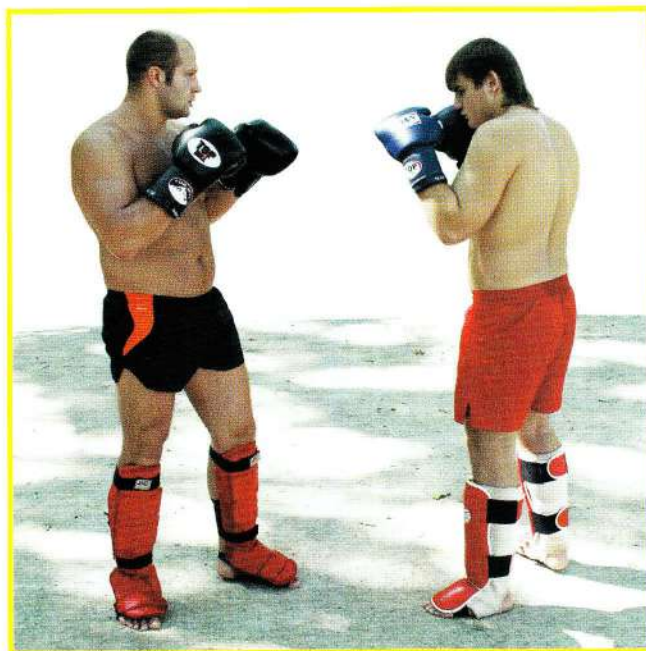


## SWITCH STEP OUTSIDE MID KICK

Throwing a mid kick with your lead leg is an excellent way to catch your opponent off guard, but it is hard to generate the same kind of power as you do when you kick with your rear leg. If you're standing with your left foot forward and want to land a powerful mid kick with your left leg, you need to switch into a southpaw stance. This can be achieved a couple of different ways. If your opponent is already within kicking range, you'll want to utilize a switch step as I do in the sequence below. It's not the fastest kick out there, but oftentimes switching your feet will throw your opponent off and create an opening to attack. A good setup is to throw a right cross, execute a switch step, and then kick. If your opponent is outside of punching range and you want to land a powerful mid kick with your lead leg, switching your feet won't get you any closer to him. In such a situation, you can simply step toward your opponent to achieve a southpaw stance. However, anytime you step your rear foot blindly toward your opponent you will be vulnerable to strikes, so I highly recommend setting such a technique up with punches as well.



I'm in my fighting stance.

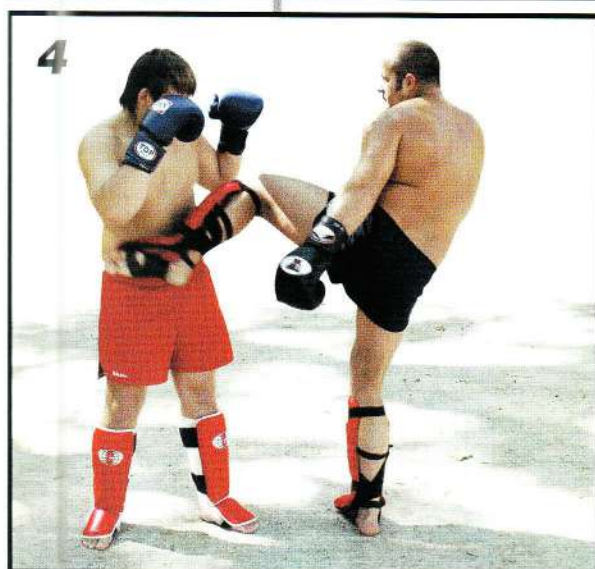
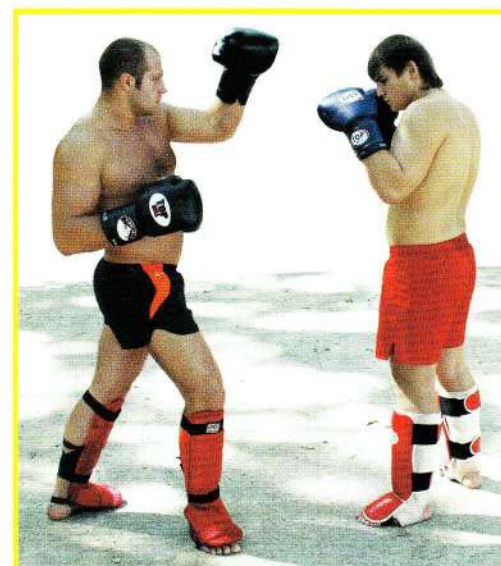


In order to throw a powerful left mid kick, I reverse the positioning of my feet by sliding my left foot back across the ground and skipping my right foot forward. At the same time, I elevate my left arm to shield my face and drop my right arm to keep my shoulders square with my opponent. The moment I land in a southpaw stance, I will be ready to launch the kick.

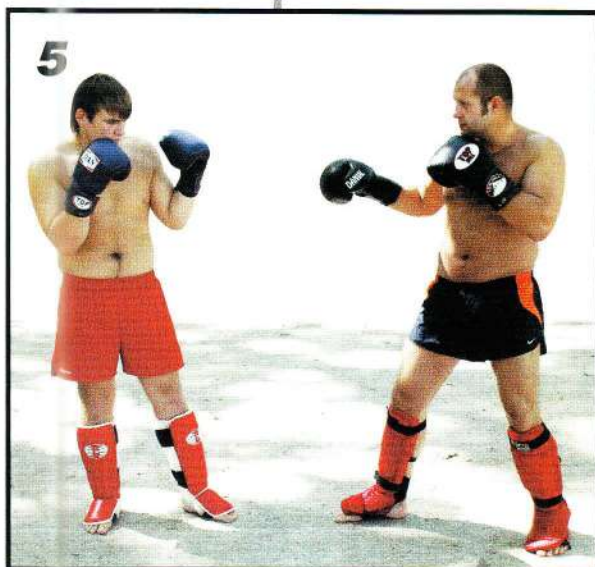




Having switched my feet, I assume a southpaw stance. It is important to notice my positioning. I'm balanced on the ball of my left foot, my right foot is pointing toward my right at a forty-five-degree angle, my left arm is shielding my face, and my right arm is down by my side. The instant I land in this stance, I'm ready to throw the kick.



As I push off the ball of my left foot and thrust my left hip forward, my left leg whips off the ground toward Kirill's midsection. At the same time, I elevate my right hand to protect my face and throw my left hand behind me to generate more power in the kick and maintain my balance.



As my left leg rebounds off Kirill's midsection, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and return to a southpaw stance. From here, I can immediately launch another attack or step back and reestablish my traditional fighting stance.

### KEY CONCEPTS

**PRIMARY TARGETS:** The target zones will differ depending on how you and your opponent are standing. If you're both in a standard fighting stance with your left leg forward, then your primary target will be his stomach and liver region. If you're in an opposite stance to that of your opponent, target the soft tissue of his oblique located between his ribcage and hip.

\*Do not jump when you execute the switch step. It will cause your head to raise up and not only telegraph your intentions, but also make you vulnerable to attack. Instead of jumping, slide both feet across the canvas.

\*Immediately throw the kick after switching your feet. If you hesitate, your opponent will have an opportunity to launch a counterattack while you're in a southpaw stance.

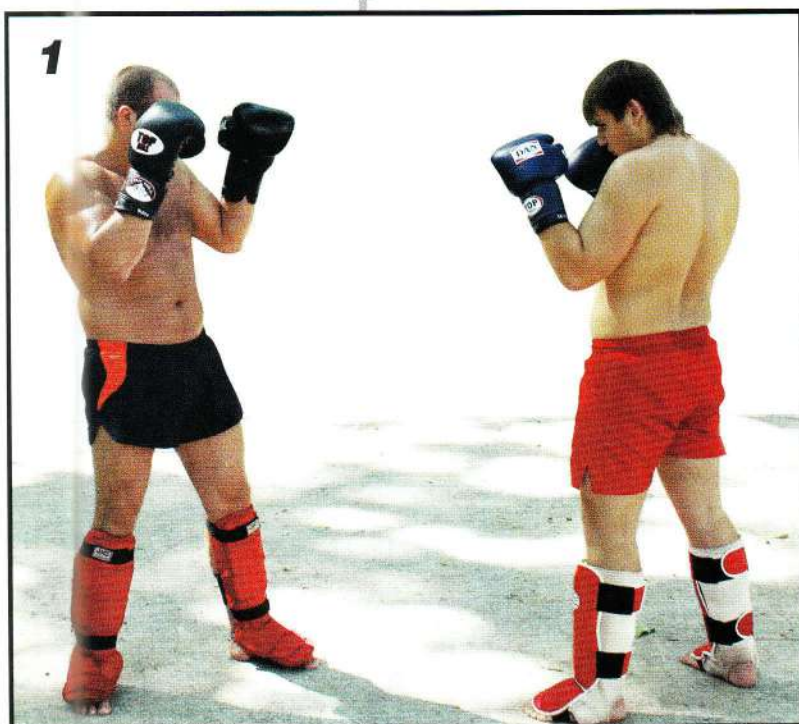
\*When you recover from throwing the kick, you'll often end up in a southpaw stance. If you're not accustomed to fighting with your right foot forward, immediately step back into your original stance.

\*The more relaxed you are when you throw this kick, the quicker your recovery will be.

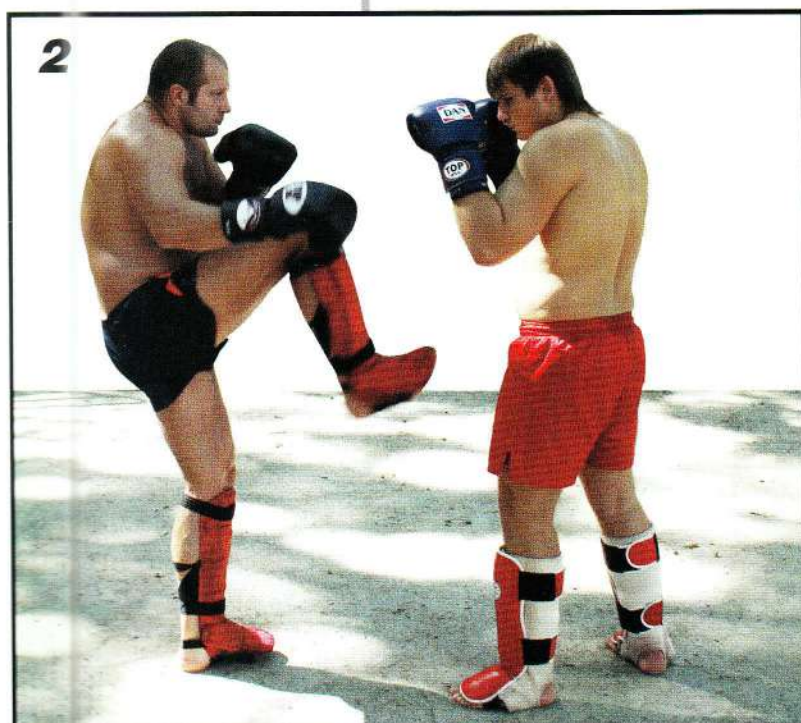


## RIGHT PUSH KICK

The push kick is an excellent tool for creating distance, which can come in handy when you're up against an opponent who rushes relentlessly forward. It can be thrown with either your front leg or your back. Push kicking with your front leg is very similar to the jab—it is a quick technique but doesn't possess a whole lot of power. Push kicking with your back leg is a lot like the cross—it is slightly slower, but it packs enough power to cause a fair amount of damage. The push kick also has many different targets. Striking your opponent's lead knee can cause him to drop his head, which sets you up for a punching technique such as an uppercut. Kicking his lead hip can also cause him to bend forward at the waist, which also sets you up for punches. But perhaps the most prized target for the push kick is the solar plexus. When you land such a strike clean, there is a good chance that you'll knock the wind out of your opponent, giving you an opportunity to capitalize on his stunned state with any number of techniques.

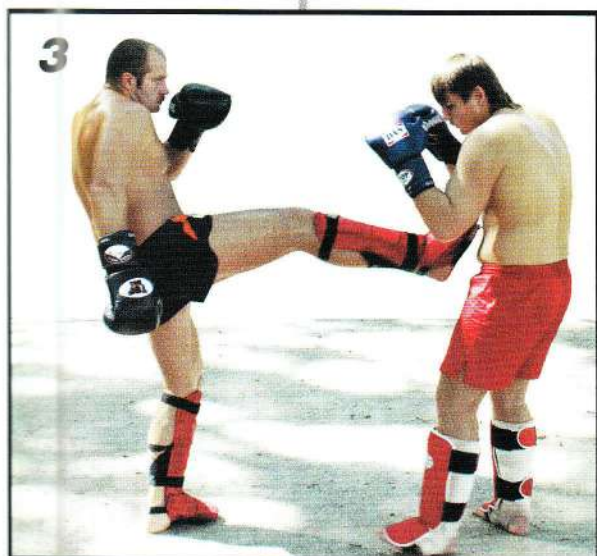


**I'm in my fighting stance.**

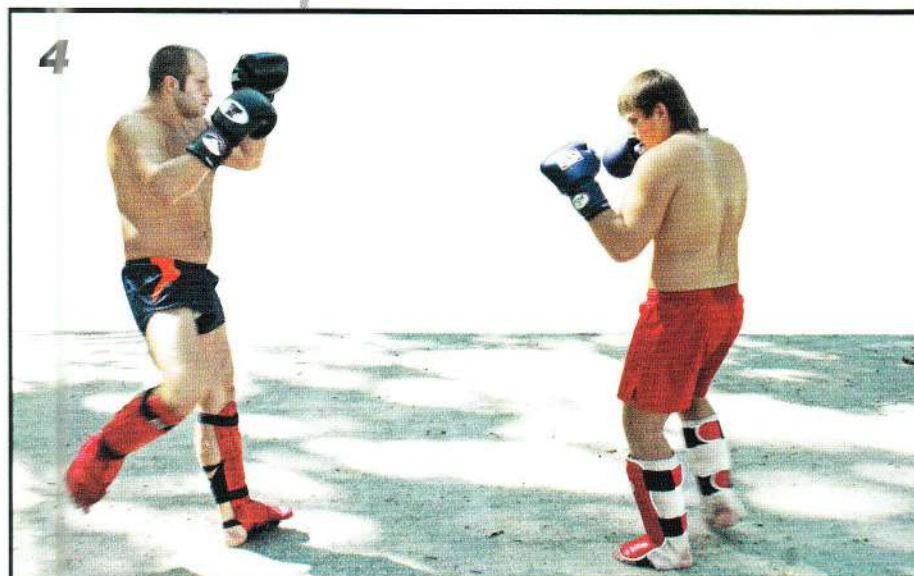


**Slightly rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I draw my right knee up to my chest. It is important to notice that I've coiled my right leg toward my body. This spring-loads my leg and will add a considerable amount of pushing power to my kick.**





In one fluid motion, I thrust my right hip forward, throw my right arm behind my body to maintain balance and generate power for the kick, and drive the ball of my right foot into Kirill's solar plexus.



I push my right foot off Kirill's chest and begin pulling my leg back toward my stance.



I reestablish my fighting stance. Notice how much distance I was able to create between Kirill and myself.

### KEY CONCEPTS

**PRIMARY TARGETS:** lead leg, hip, solar plexus, face.

\*To generate power, draw your knee up to your chest before thrusting your hips forward and driving your foot into the target.

\*Connecting with your target using the ball of your foot not only increases the distance you can cover with the kick, but also causes more damage due the small surface area of your weapon.

\*Instead of executing a snap-kick, extend your leg into your opponent's body.

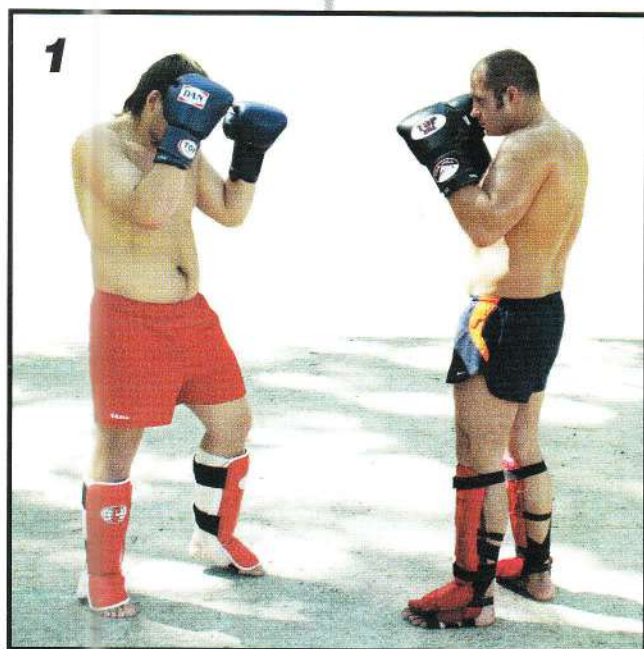
\*Pushing your foot off your opponent's body will help you pull your leg back into your fighting stance quicker.

\*Keep your body centered. If you lean forward and miss your kick, you'll get thrust off balance and be vulnerable to your opponent's counterstrikes.

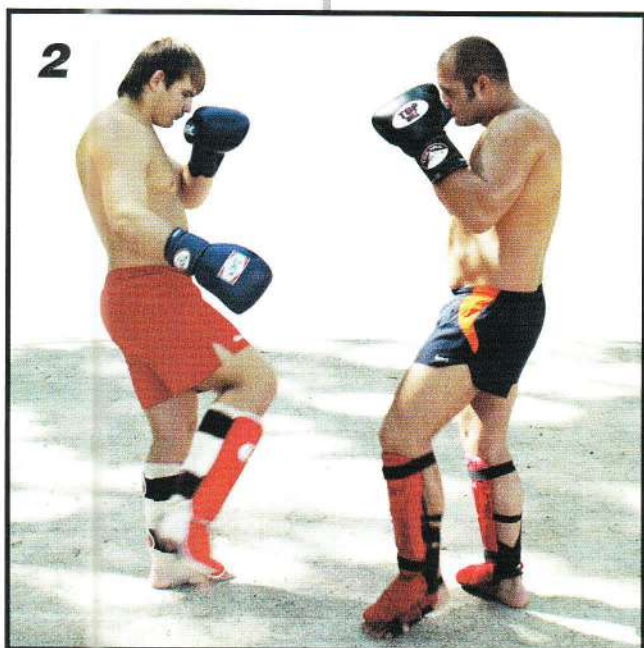


## LEAD LOW CHECK

In this day and age, virtually everyone competing in MMA understands how to throw powerful kicks. It doesn't matter if you are up against an opponent who is primarily a wrestler or jiu-jitsu practitioner—if he has been training at an MMA academy, he's been taught how to kick. One of the most common targets for your opponent's kicks will be your lead leg. While most opponents will generally reserve high and mid kicks for situations where you are off balance, a lot of opponents will lead striking combinations with low kicks or throw them by themselves because they are quick and easy to land, and they seldom leave them in a compromising position. It's possible to absorb two or three low kicks and continue to fight at 100 percent, but if your opponent lands ten or twenty of them throughout the fight, you'll most likely be in serious pain and find it next to impossible to implement your game plan. To prevent this outcome, you must learn how to check your opponent's low kicks. It's an excellent tool when utilized with proper form and timing because not only do you avoid your opponent's attack, but you can also cause him a serious amount of damage. The more kicks you successfully check, the less likely your opponent will be to throw kicks. With one simple defensive technique, you can seriously hinder your opponent's game plan. The one thing you need to pay special attention to when checking is the height of your opponent's kick. It can sometimes be difficult to tell if a kick is heading toward your leg or your midsection, so it's best to check high enough to block both. However, it is important not to check so high that your opponent can kick underneath your checking leg and strike the calf muscle of your grounded leg.



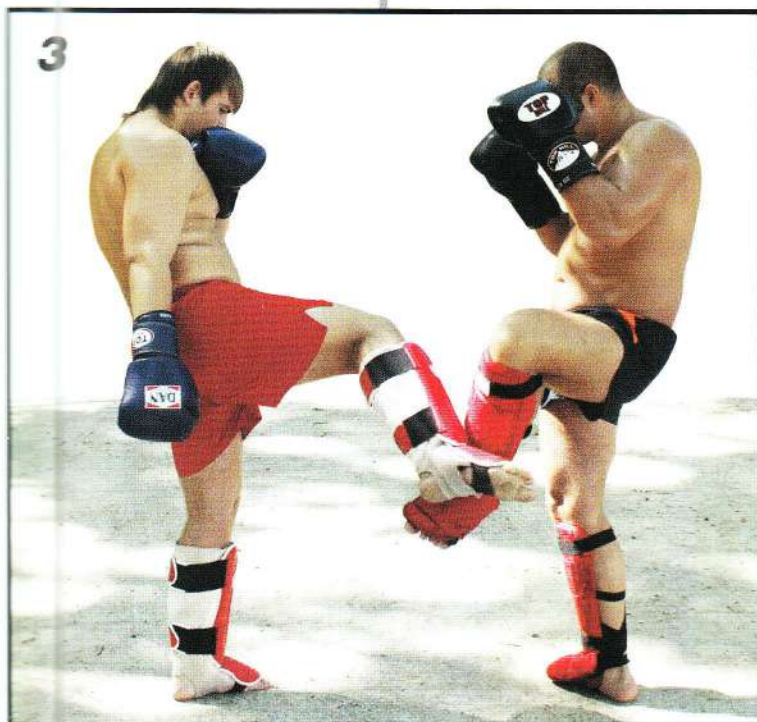
I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



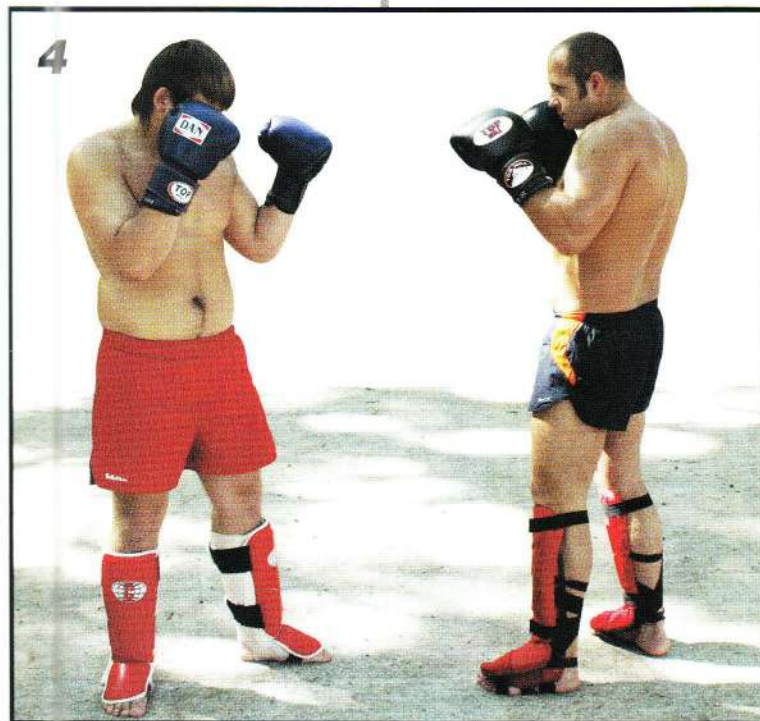
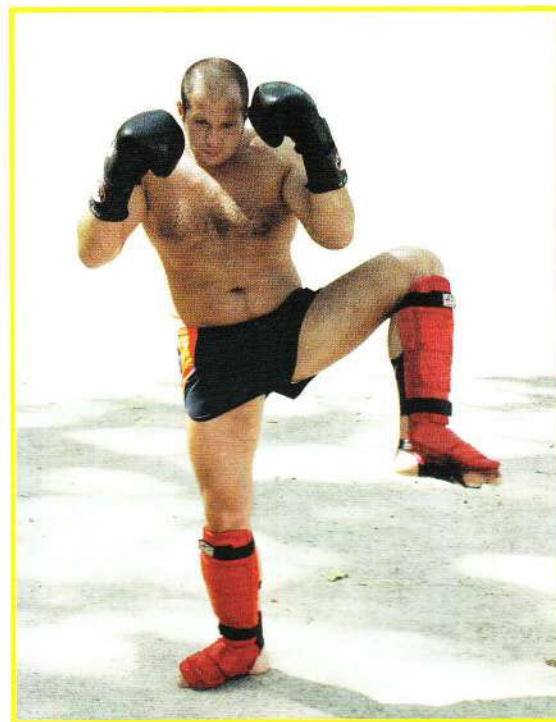
Before I can launch my attack, Kirill throws a right low kick at my left thigh. Immediately I begin elevating my left knee.



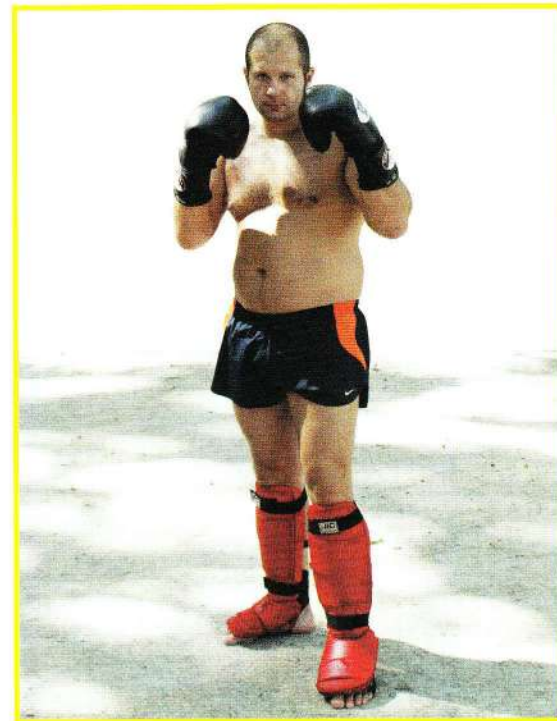




Kirill's right leg comes hurtling toward my left thigh. To check his kick, I lift my left foot off the ground. Notice how my left shin and knee are now pointing at a forty-five-degree angle to my left, creating a solid barrier that guards the lower portion of my body on my left side. As Kirill's kick lands, it connects with the front of my shinbone rather than the sensitive muscles of my calf.



Having checked Kirill's kick, I drop my left leg and reestablish my fighting stance.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

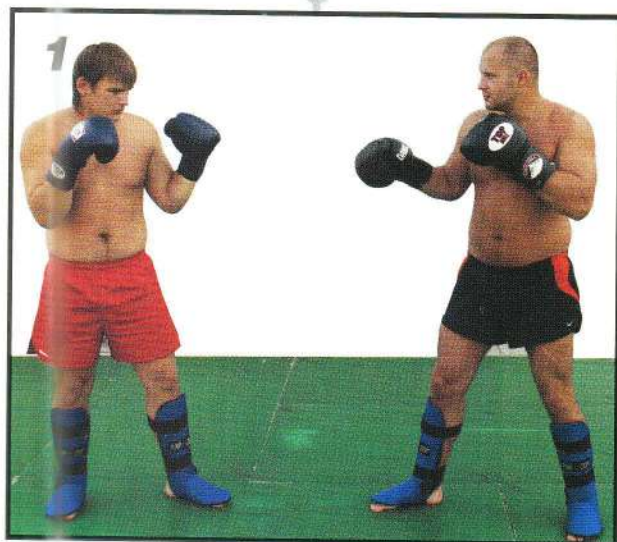
- \* Angle your shin outward so that your opponent's kick clashes with your shinbone.
- \* After checking a kick, immediately return your leg to its proper position in your stance.
- \* Elevate your checking leg high enough to block both a low and mid-range kick, but don't raise it so high that your opponent can kick underneath your check and strike the calf muscle of your grounded leg.
- \* Protect both sides of your head when you check.



## LEAD MID CHECK / LEAD HIGH CHECK

The lead mid check is the same as the low check in that you want to angle your knee and shin outward at a forty-five-degree angle, keep your hands up, and maintain a straight posture, but because your opponent is attacking your midsection, you need to raise your knee up past your elbow to create a solid barrier. This will prevent your opponent from swinging his leg over your knee and connecting with your midsection. If you look at the photos in the sequence below, you'll notice that I elevate my knee to the outside of my arm. Some prefer to raise their knee up to the inside of their arm, but this can cause you to take the brunt of the kick on your forearm, which is a much weaker bone than the shin. You'll also notice that I bring my far arm across my face as I check, which serves a couple of purposes. If my opponent goes high with the kick, I can use my far hand to help absorb some of the impact on my near forearm. It also helps protect my face should my opponent fake the kick and leap forward with a superman punch.

At the end of the sequence, I demonstrate how to alter your mid check to block a high kick. I've lumped these two together because it can often be difficult to determine if your opponent's kick is headed toward your midsection or head, and by the time you figure it out, you only have a split second to adjust your check. If what you thought was a mid kick turns out to be a high kick, the first thing you want to do is place your knee against your elbow to form a solid barrier, and then angle your elbow away from your body at forty-five degrees. This allows you to absorb the majority of the impact on the points of your elbow and kneecap, which will not only make the strike less painful to you, but will also cause an ample amount of damage to your opponent's leg. The second thing you want to do is tuck your chin to your chest and reach your left hand behind your head. If your opponent can produce some serious elevation with his high kick, and his shin sails over the barrier you created between your knee and elbow, your altered positioning will cause his leg to skip off your outwardly angled forearm and sail over the top of your head, putting you in a good spot to launch a counterattack.



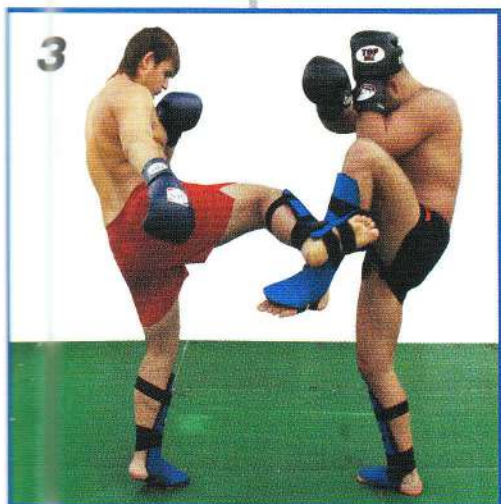
I'm in a southpaw stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Before I can launch my attack, Kirill throws a right kick at my midsection. Immediately I bring my left leg forward to check his kick.



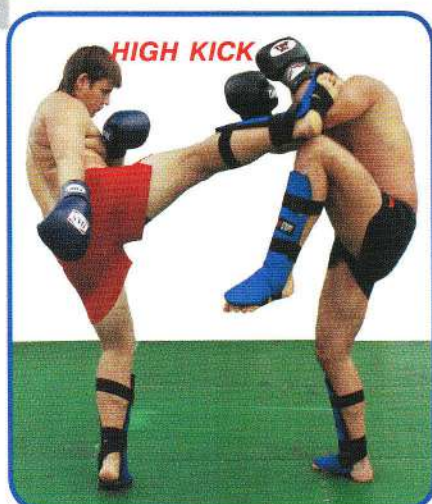




To block Kirill's kick, I tuck my chin to my chest, place my left hand on the left side of my head, move my right arm across my face, and draw my left knee up to the outside of my left elbow.



Having checked Kirill's kick, I drop my left leg and reestablish my traditional fighting stance.



Kirill throws a high kick at my head. Just as with the mid kick, I tuck my chin to my chest, reach my left hand toward the back of my head, and bring my right arm across my face for protection. However, to deal with the higher kick, I bring my knee up to the point of my elbow, and then angle my elbow toward the ground to my left at forty-five degrees. In this particular situation, Kirill's kick slams directly into my elbow and knee. If his kick had been higher still, his leg would have skipped off my outwardly angled left arm and sailed over my head.

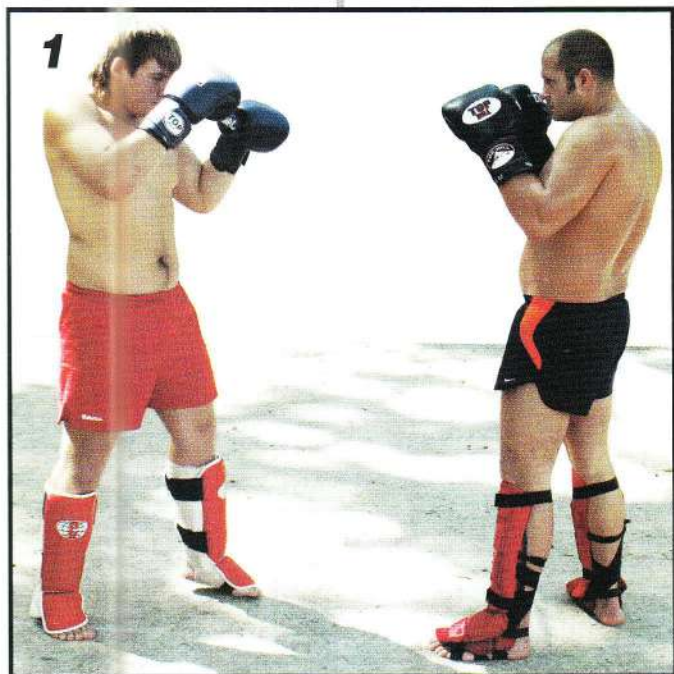
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Elevate your checking leg outward at a forty-five-degree angle.
- \* Draw your knee up to your elbow to create a solid barrier with your leg and arm.
- \* Cover the side of your head with your left forearm and angle your left elbow away from your body at forty-five degrees.
- \* Reach your right arm across the front of your face to protect yourself from punches.

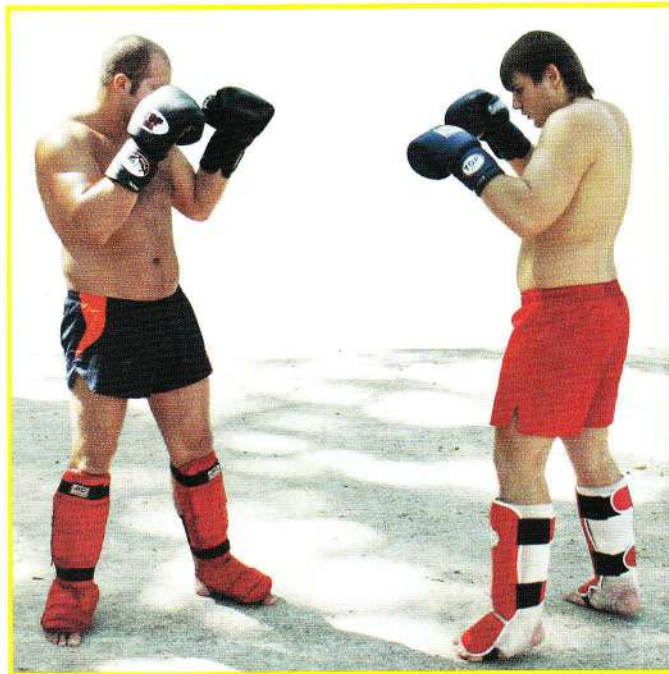


## REAR LOW CHECK

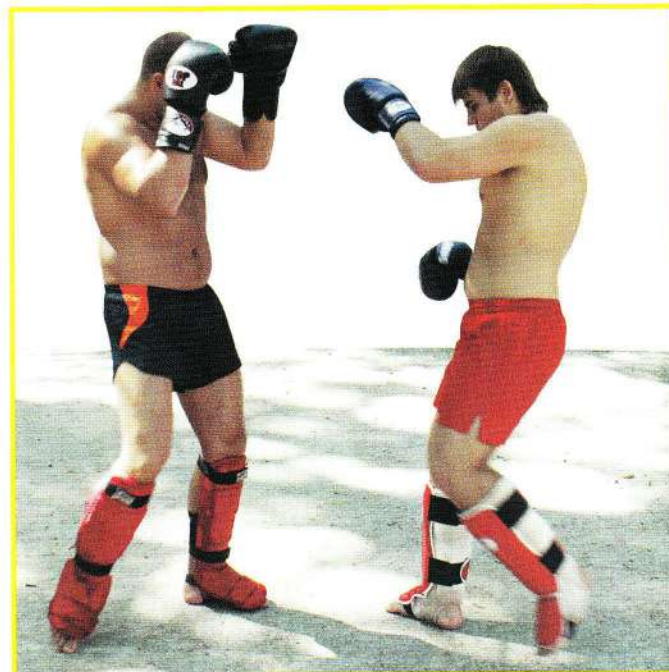
When you're in a traditional stance fighting an opponent in a traditional stance, and he attacks the lower portion of your body with kicks, the majority of the time he will target your lead leg. The time to pay special attention to kicks aimed at your rear leg is when your opponent changes his stance or when you're up against a southpaw fighter. Although it is possible to check these kicks by crossing your near leg over to the opposite side of your body, it doesn't produce a solid barrier and will often leave you off balance. A better option is to bring your rear leg forward to check. All the same principles of the previous checks apply, such as angling your shin outward at forty-five degrees and bringing your leg high enough off the ground to block the kick, but not so high that your opponent can kick underneath your foot and strike your grounded calf. The two main differences are that you have to bring your leg forward to catch your opponent's kick, and then bring it backward to reestablish your fighting stance.



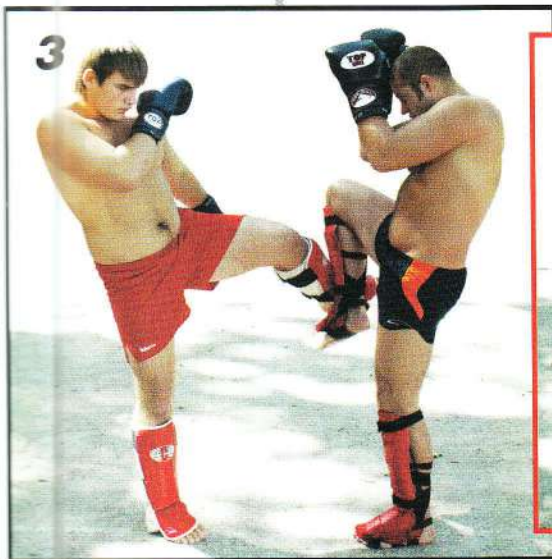
I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opportunity to attack.



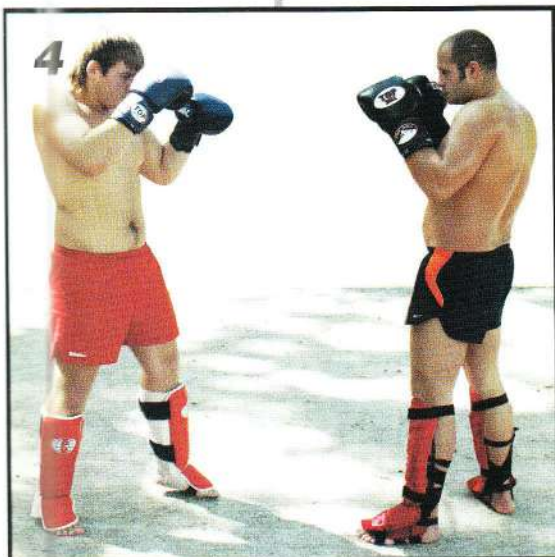
Before I can launch my attack, Kirill reverses his stance by executing a switch step and prepares to throw a left roundhouse kick.



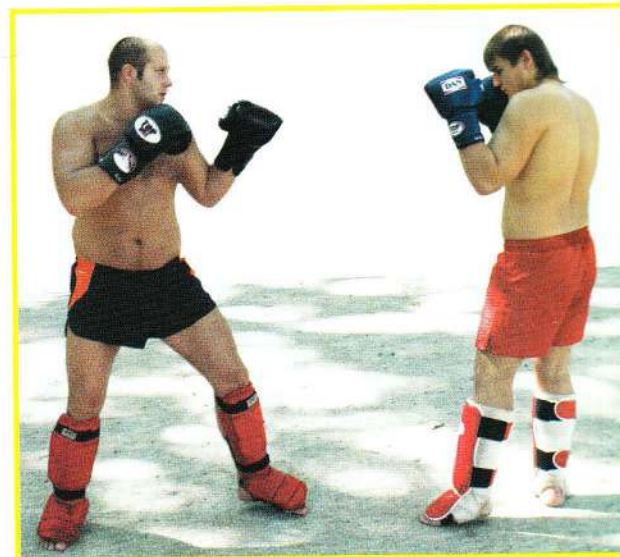




Kirill throws a left roundhouse kick at my right thigh. To block his kick, I elevate my right knee and bring my leg forward. Notice how my knee is pointing at a forty-five-degree angle to my right. This allows me to catch the kick with my shinbone instead of with my calf muscle. Both of my hands are up to protect my face from possible punches.



Having checked Kirill's kick, I pull my leg back and reestablish my fighting stance.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Bring your rear leg forward to meet your opponent's kick.
- \* Angle your knee outwards at forty-five degrees. This will ensure that you catch the kick on your shinbone instead of with the sensitive calf muscle.
- \* Keep your hands up to protect your head.
- \* After checking the kick, either step forward with an attack or return your leg to its original position in your fighting stance.
- \* Elevate your leg high enough to block both a low and mid kick, but don't raise it up so high that your opponent can kick underneath your check and strike the calf of your grounded leg.



## REAR MID AND HIGH CHECK

If you are fighting an opponent in an opposite stance, or he changes his stance by executing a switch step, you'll want to use your back leg to block his rear kicks aimed at your head. As I've mentioned before, it can be difficult to determine whether your opponent's kick is aimed at your midsection or head. For this reason, it is important that you utilize a check that can effectively block both kicks. In the sequence below, my opponent is kicking directly at my head. I block his kick just as I would a kick aimed at my midsection—the only difference is the part of my leg that I use to block the kick. With a head kick, you want to block using your kneecap and elbow. With a midsection kick, you want to block the kick using your shin or knee. When checking both kinds of kicks it is important to form a shield with your arms because when up against an exceptionally limber opponent, there is always the chance that he will throw a kick aimed at the top of your head. As long as you have your arm shield established, the kick will skip off your arms and sail over the top of your head. If you watch my fight with Mirko "Crocop" Flilpovic, you'll notice that I used this check to fend off his savage kicks. During the course of the fight, he threw mid-range kicks and high kicks, and I used this check to block both.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.

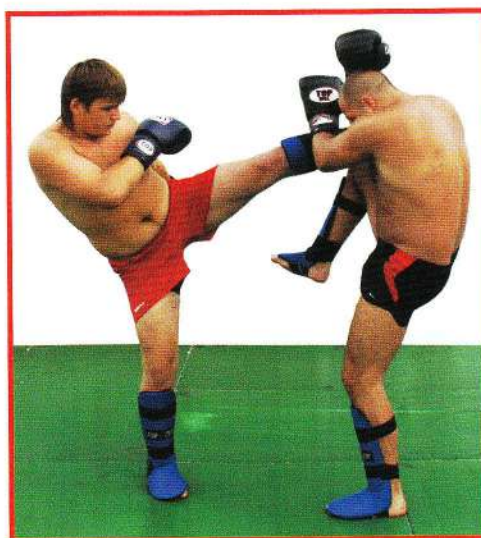


Before I can launch my attack, Kirill reverses his stance by executing a switch step.

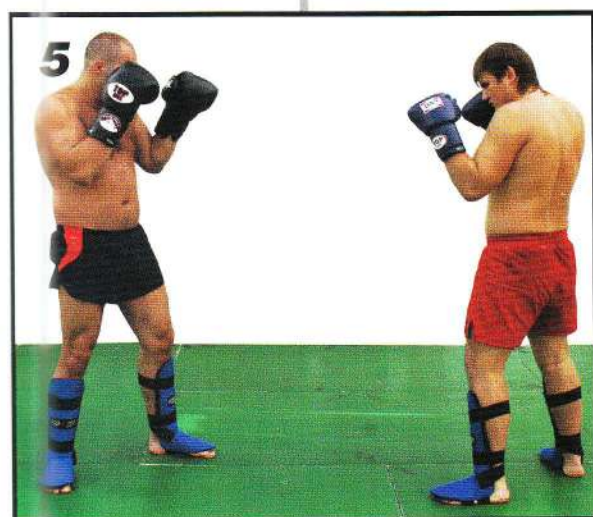




Kirill establishes a southpaw stance and prepares to throw a left roundhouse kick.



Kirill throws a left roundhouse kick to my head. To check his kick, I elevate my right knee up to my right elbow, reach my right arm behind my head, and move my left arm in front of my face for protection. Having created a solid barrier on my right side, Kirill's kick collides with my kneecap and elbow. If he had directed his kick at my midsection, I would have caught his leg with the center of my shin. And if he had thrown the kick at the very top of my head, his leg would have skipped off my forearm and sailed over my head.



Having checked Kirill's left roundhouse kick, I lower my leg and reestablish my fighting stance.

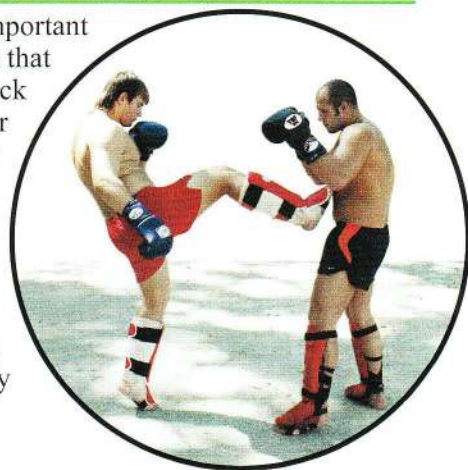
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Angle your knee at forty-five degrees to the outside.
- \*Draw your knee up to your elbow to create a solid barrier with your leg and arm.
- \*Cover the right side of your head with your right forearm, and angle your right elbow away from your body at forty-five degrees. If your opponent kicks toward the top of your head, this will cause his leg to skip off of your arm and sail over your head.
- \*Bring your left arm across the front of your face to guard against punches.



## CROSS CHECK BLOCK FOR PUSH KICK

Although push kicks aren't as frequently utilized in MMA as round kicks, it is still important that you learn how to block them. If you're up against skilled kickboxer and he knows that you're vulnerable to push kicks, he'll throw them all day long. An excellent way to block the push kick is to employ a cross check. This is where you bring one leg across your body to redirect your opponent's strike away from your centerline. It doesn't matter if the kick is aimed at your hips, stomach, or solar plexus—the cross check is done the same. Unlike the previous checks I've shown, the nice part about the cross check is that you're not absorbing the momentum of your opponent's kick using your leg. Instead, you cause him to miss his kick entirely. Not only does this cause you less damage, but it can also disrupt your opponent's balance, allowing you to immediately launch an attack of your own. Needless to say, the most important aspect of the cross check is timing. If you block too early or too late, your opponent's foot will most likely find its target.



I'm squared off with Kirill in my fighting stance.



Kirill throws a right push kick toward my centerline. Immediately I lift my right foot off the mat and swing my leg horizontally through the air toward the left side of my body. The goal is to bat your opponent's leg off course. Notice how I've kept both of my hands up to protect my face.

### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Elevate your rear leg and then move it horizontally across your body toward your lead arm.
- \*Intercept your opponent's kick while it is being thrown.
- \*Keep both of your hands up to protect your head.



Before Kirill's right foot can find its target, I bat his leg toward my left side using my right shin. A lot of times using a cross check to block a push kick will cause your opponent to fall forward, allowing you to catch him off guard with a striking combination.





# COUNTER ATTACKS

The goal in any fight is to constantly remain on the offensive and either rack up enough points to earn a judges' decision or put your opponent to sleep. If your opponent is timid or dramatically outclassed, achieving your goal can be quite easy. You simply beat on him until he drops. However, the majority of opponents you face will climb into the ring or cage with the exact same goal as you, which means you'll have to contend with his attacks. The only way to remain offensive against an opponent who is also offensive-minded is to learn how to counter his attacks. By attacking, evading his strikes, and then immediately launching counterattacks, your opponent will be locked in defense mode even though he is throwing every strike in the book at you. And as long as he is constantly defending, you'll be winning the fight.

As I have already mentioned, I seldom use my hands or arms to block my opponent's punches due to the small gloves used in MMA. Instead, I prefer evasive tactics. There are many ways to evade a punch, and the option you choose will depend upon the strike thrown. You can slip the punch by rotating your shoulders and bending at the waist. You can move your head out of range by stepping or leaning backward. You can duck the punch by bending at the knees and lowering the elevation of your head. You can even sidestep and move your whole body offline from the strike. I cover all of these tactics in the coming section, and I suggest you learn as many of them as possible.

I begin the section by demonstrating several methods for countering a jab. The bulk of these techniques focus on slipping your head offline from your opponent's punch, countering with a jab of your own as his fists sails by your head, and then following up with a combination. Next, I show how to counter a hook and a number of counters for the infamous right cross. Countering the cross shares the same characteristics as countering the jab in that you can slip the punch and counter with a cross of your own at the same time, but because your opponent's fist has to travel a much greater distance to connect with your face, you have several other options as well, such as the side step. After covering these options, I conclude the section by demonstrating several combinations you can employ after checking a kick, as well as how to utilize other counters such as catching a kick and using strikes to halt your opponent's attack.

Throughout this section I also introduce the "low-high" and "high-low" method of attack. With the former you use low strikes to get your opponent to drop his guard, making his head vulnerable to attack, and with the later you strike your opponent's head to get him to elevate his guard, which makes the lower portion of his body vulnerable. I included the "low-high" and "high-low" striking combinations that have worked best for me over the years, but by no means should they be considered law. Once you get comfortable with them, I strongly suggest experimenting as much as possible to learn which combinations work best for you.



## SLIP JAB TO COUNTER JAB TO CROSS

The jab is a quick linear punch thrown with the lead hand, making it a difficult strike to see coming. To increase your odds of successfully slipping your opponent's jabs, it is important to pick up on his habits. For example, a lot of fighters will lead nearly all of their striking combinations with a jab because it allows them to close the distance between your bodies and momentarily blind you with their fist. If your opponent does this three or four times in a row, it is wise to be ready for the jab whenever he moves aggressively toward you. Other fighters will give tells, such as dropping their lead hand just prior to firing the punch. Training your mind to pick up on these signs is mandatory for slipping this speedy punch, and the more you study your opponent's body language and practice slipping drills, the more instinctive your slipping maneuvers will become. However, it is important never to assume. If your opponent is a masterful striker, he will do everything in his power to make you think he is locked into a pattern. He may lead five striking combinations with a jab or drop his lead hand every time he throws the jab. Once he has you reacting in a certain way to his false pattern, he'll switch things up and catch you off guard. For this reason, it is important to never completely buy in to your opponent's tells. Use them to predict his movements to the best of your ability, but always be ready to alter your reaction should he be baiting you with meat on the end of a hook.

Slipping your opponent's punch should be considered a victory because you just avoided a painful impact, but slipping a punch and delivering one of your own at the same time is even better. In the sequence below, I slip my opponent's jab and launch an overhand jab at the same time. I particularly like this technique because the overhand has a slip built into its dynamics. By dipping your head to the side to generate power for the punch, you move your head away from your centerline, which fulfills the main requirement of the slip. Anytime you practice throwing an overhand jab, you're practicing the slip at the same time. However, it is important to train this technique as a drill because timing is not something you can develop by throwing overhand jabs at the punching bag. When training with a partner, the goal is to spot the jab coming before his hand has barely moved, slip your head to the side, and land the overhand just as his fist sails by the side of your head. Once you get comfortable countering with the overhand every time your opponent throws a jab, practice following up with a striking combination. Fighting is about rhythm, and the best way to break your opponent's rhythm is to land a strike when he is in the middle of a combination. If you don't capitalize on his stunned state, you'll be missing out on a golden opportunity to cause damage. In the sequence below, I follow up with the traditional right cross.



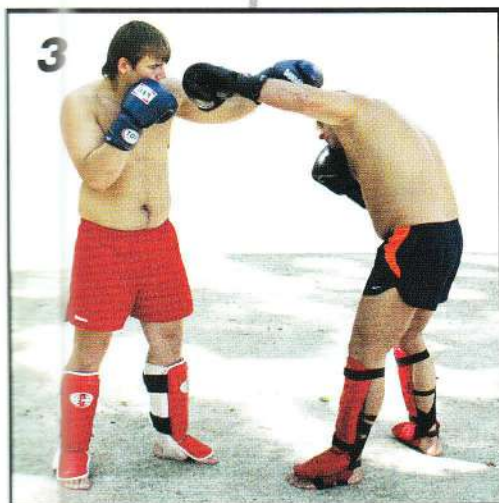
I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Keeping my right hand pinned to my face, I dip my head to my right side to slip Kirill's punch and begin to extend my left arm straight out.







As Kirill extends his left hand, I continue to dip my head toward my right side and throw my left hand toward his face. Notice how I've begun to rotate my hand over so that my thumb is pointing toward the ground.



Having slipped my head offline from Kirill's jab, his hand misses its target. Before he can pull his arm back into his stance, I rotate my hand over so that my thumb is pointing toward the ground and crash my fist into the center of his face.



I have broken Kirill's rhythm by landing the overhand jab. To capitalize, I throw a right cross over his left arm and connect with his temple.



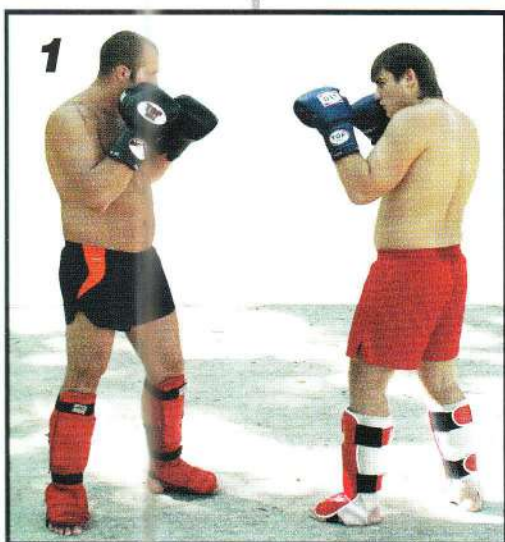
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Don't lean your entire body to the side when you throw the overhand jab. To throw the punch and slip your opponent's jab, all you have to do is bend at the waist.
- \*Time this technique so that you slip your opponent's jab and land your strike at the same time.
- \*As you extend your arm, turn your hand over so that your thumb is pointing toward the mat.
- \*Keep your rear hand pinned to your face for protection.

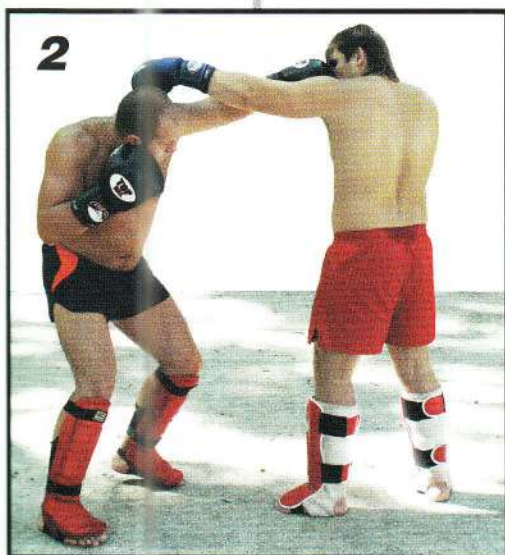
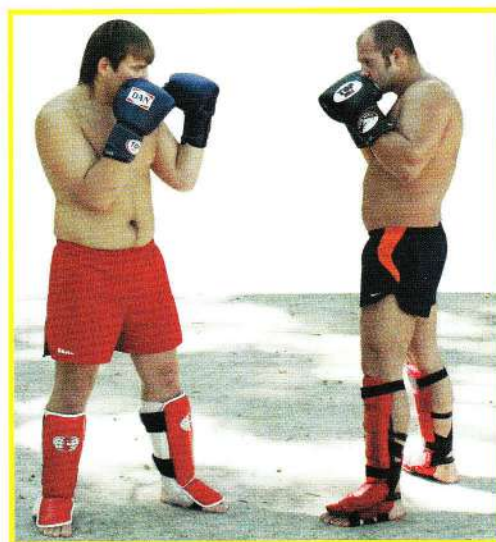


## SLIP JAB TO FOUR-PUNCH COMBO

As I mentioned in the introduction to the previous technique, countering an opponent's jab with a jab of your own is an excellent way to disrupt his rhythm and create openings for offensive combinations. In the sequence below, I demonstrate one of an endless number of combinations that you can string together. The combination you choose should be based upon your strengths, the positioning of your body in relation to your opponent, and the openings that are present. Having a set combination that you use every time you counter your opponent's jab with the overhand will lessen the likelihood that you will be effective with the combination. Instead, you want to build the combination on the spot by capitalizing on openings and using the techniques that feel most natural in that particular moment. Sometimes that combination may include a takedown, a left hook, a kick. However, one thing to keep in mind while building your combination is the low-high principle. If you look at the combination I demonstrate in the sequence below, you'll notice that I use strikes that attack both the lower and upper portion of my opponent's body. Focusing on just one area of your opponent's body will increase his chances of being able to defend against your attack.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Before I can launch an attack, Kirill throws a left jab at my face. As his hand comes forward, I extend my left arm and slip my head offline from his punch by dipping my head toward my right side. Just before my fist collides with his face, I rotate my hand in a clockwise direction so that my thumb is pointing toward the mat. It is important to notice that I didn't slip his jab and then throw the overhand jab, but rather executed both movements at the same time.



### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Instead of leaning your entire body to the side, slip your opponent's jab by bending at the waist.
- \*Slip your opponent's jab and throw the overhand jab at the same time.
- \*Instead of having a set combination every time you counter a jab with a jab of your own, build your combination on the spot based upon feel and the openings present.
- \*The instant your counter jab lands, move on to your next attack.





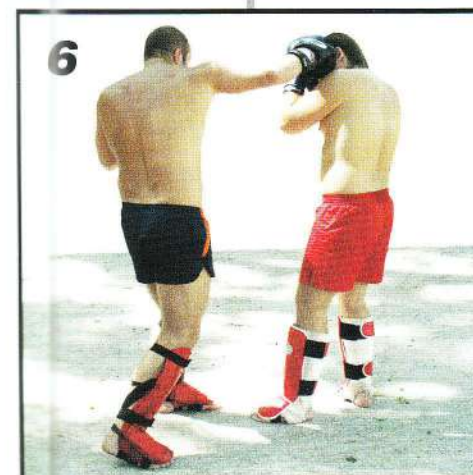
With Kirill's left arm still extended, his body is vulnerable to a right uppercut. To set myself up for this punch, I rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, pull my left hand back into my stance, and lower my right hand. If you hesitate after countering your opponent's jab, the chances are he will pull his arm back into his stance to better protect his body.



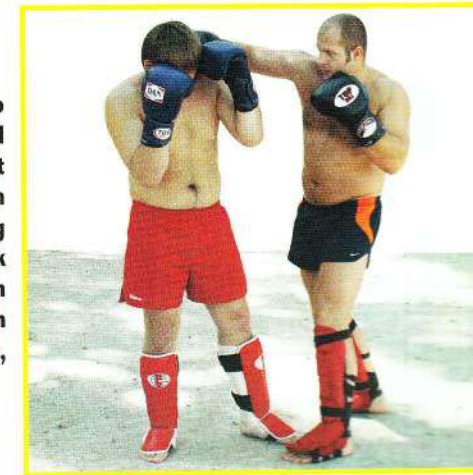
Continuing to rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, I take a small step forward with my left foot, come up onto the ball of my right foot, and throw a right uppercut to the left side of Kirill's ribcage.



Having pulled Kirill's focus away from his head by landing the body shot, I've created an opening to go high with my next attack. Seeing an opening to land a left hook to his face, I pull my right hand back into my stance, take a small step forward with my right foot, rotate my hips in a clockwise direction by pivoting on my left foot, and deliver the blow.



I've stunned Kirill with the left hook. To continue my attack, I draw my left hand back into my stance, step my left foot forward, turn my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction by pivoting on my right foot, and throw a right hook to Kirill's head. Once accomplished, I can follow up with any number of attacks, such as a takedown, a right low kick, a left hook, and so on.



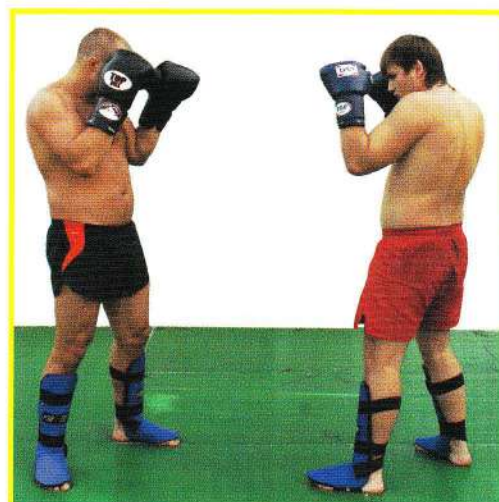


## COUNTER JAB WITH JAB-HOOK COMBO

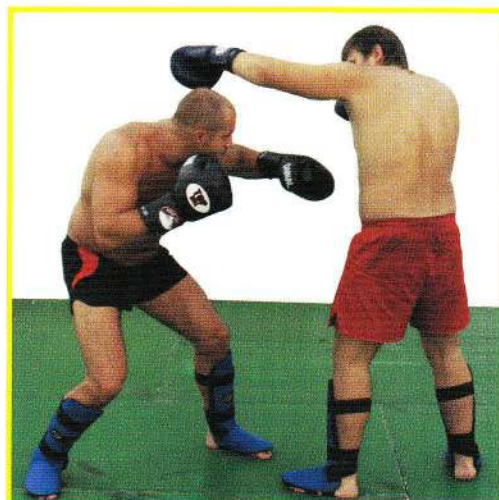
This sequence is similar to the previous two in that I slip my opponent's jab using a counter jab, but instead of targeting his face with the punch, I target his solar plexus. If you're up against a taller opponent who has a significant reach advantage, going to his body is a great alternative to reaching dramatically forward for his face. Your target will be closer, but because of the distance from which your taller opponent can throw the jab, you don't have to alter your form. The only change you have to make concerns the target. However, countering the jab with a body jab can also be highly effective when fighting an opponent who is shorter or the same height. In such a situation, your target will be a whole lot closer and lower than normal. To ensure you land a proper strike, drop your level and bend your knees as you slip his punch. Not only will this allow you to generate more power with the punch, but it will also help you be more accurate. In either situation, it is important to follow up with a combination immediately after landing the jab. In the sequence below, I follow up with a left hook to the face. At first glance, it may not seem like the best strike because of my body positioning and the fact that I'm stringing two left-handed strikes together. It might feel much more natural to follow the left jab with a right-handed attack. Although this can certainly be a good choice, a lot of opponents will expect you to do this and prepare their defenses. By steering away from tradition, you'll often catch your opponent off guard. In the combination below it's also important to notice that I'm utilizing the low-high principal. By throwing the counter jab at my opponent's body, I pull his focus and arms low, exposing his face for the left hook.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



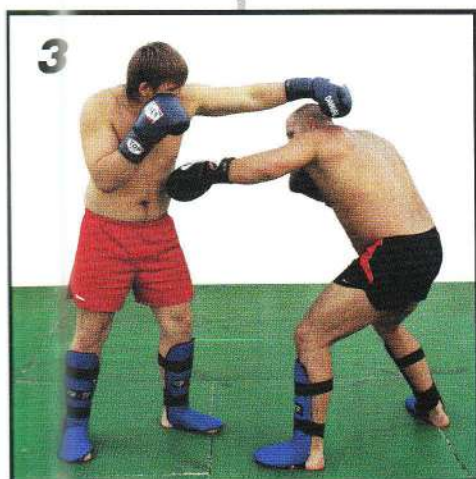
Before I can launch an attack, Kirill throws a left jab at my head. Immediately I drop my level by bending my knees, move my head offline from the punch by dipping my head toward my right side, and throw a left overhand jab toward his midsection.



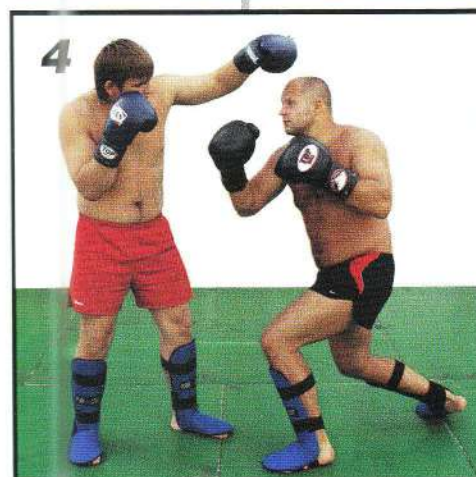
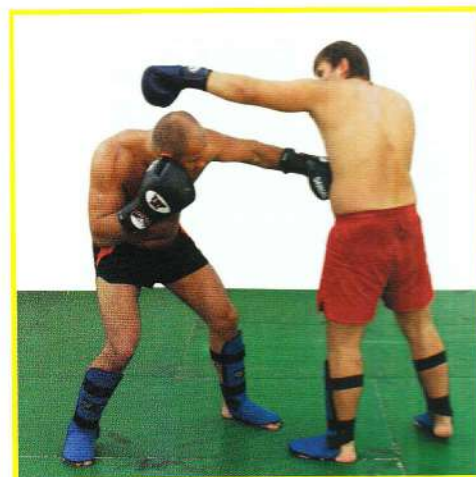
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*If you're fighting a taller opponent, throwing a counter jab to his body will be much like throwing a counter jab to the face of a shorter opponent. If you're fighting an opponent who is same height, drop your level as you slip his punch to gain more power and accuracy for the counter jab.
- \*Keep your right hand up to protect your face.
- \*By going to your opponent's body, you create an opening to attack his head.
- \*To generate power for the left hook, corkscrew your body in a counterclockwise direction after landing the left counter jab.

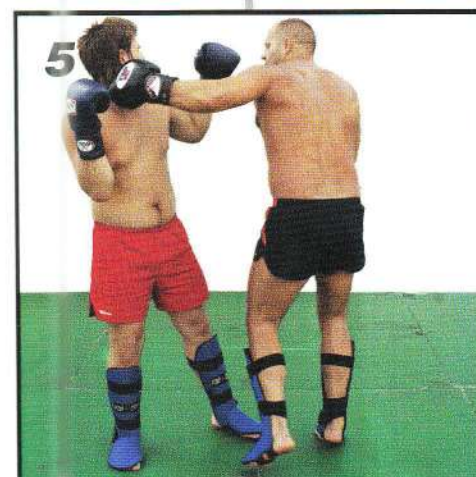
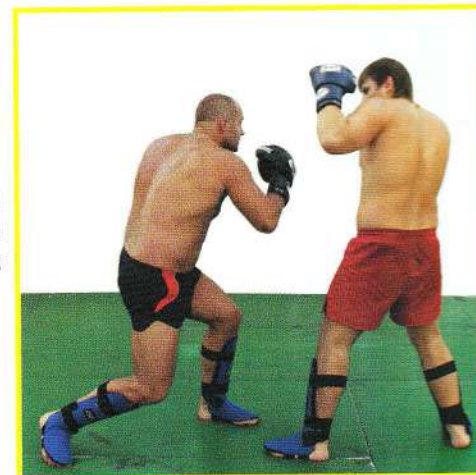




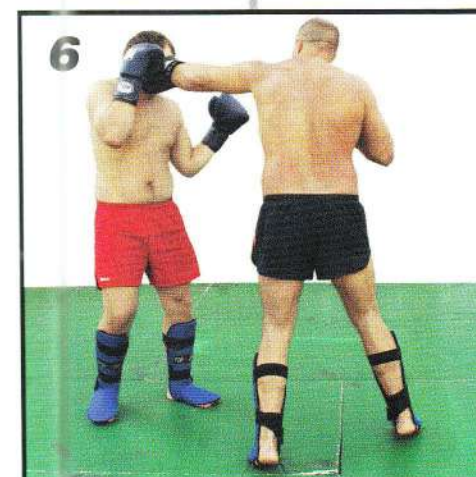
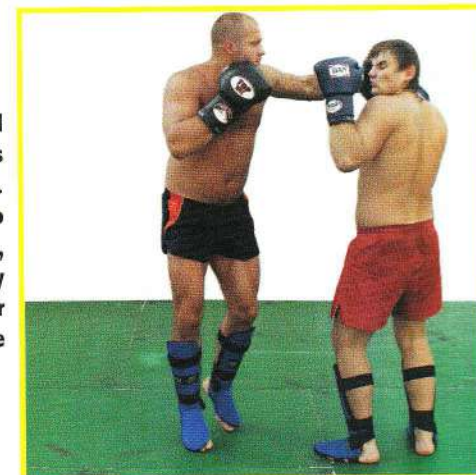
As Kirill's jab slips by my head, I land my left overhand jab to his solar plexus.



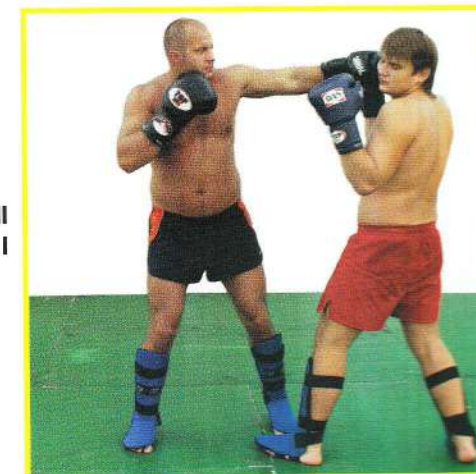
The instant my counter jab lands, I corkscrew my body in a counterclockwise direction and prepare to throw a left hook at Kirill's exposed face.



Before Kirill can regain his composure, I increase my elevation and whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction. These movements not only cause me to take a small leap forward on my left foot, but also pull my right foot toward my left. Having generated a lot of circular momentum, I throw a left hook into the side of Kirill's jaw.



As I follow through with the left hook, I fall back into my fighting stance. From here I can continue my assault.





## LEAN BACK TO THREE-PUNCH COMBO

In the previous sequences, I demonstrated how to slip an opponent's jab and counter with an overhand jab at the same time. The technique shown here is quite different. Instead of moving your head to the side to slip the jab, you take your head out of range by leaning back. Although this may seem quite simple, it can be very difficult to develop for a couple of reasons. The first is timing. If you are late to react to your opponent's jab, you'll get punched in the face. If you react too early, your opponent can pull his jab and step forward with another strike. The second reason is sense of distance. You want to lean back far enough to avoid your opponent's fist, but leaning back too far will compromise your balance and positioning. To avoid either outcome, you must always be aware of your proximity to your opponent and his reach. Once you've acquired both the necessary timing and sense of distance, it's an excellent technique because it leaves you in a position to follow your opponent's jab hand as he pulls it back toward his body. While he is trying to reestablish his fighting stance, you're charging forward with a brutal combination. If you look at the photos in the sequence below, you'll see that I come forward with a right cross. It's an excellent counterpunch to utilize because a lot of competitors will momentarily drop their lead hand after throwing the jab. It allows you to rock your opponent with a hard punch and create openings for a number of other attacks. However, before you get busy on constructing a number of elaborate combinations, it is important that you spend an ample amount of time developing the proper timing and sense of distance. The only way to achieve this is to practice this evasive technique through sparring, drilling, and doing mitt and pad work. It might be easier to focus exclusively on slipping techniques, but you'll be missing out on an excellent weapon.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Kirill throws a left jab at my head. To evade the punch, I bend my right leg and lean my upper body backward. Notice that I've leaned back far enough to avoid getting hit, but not so far that I compromise my balance. If you lose your balance, it will be very difficult to launch an effective counter.







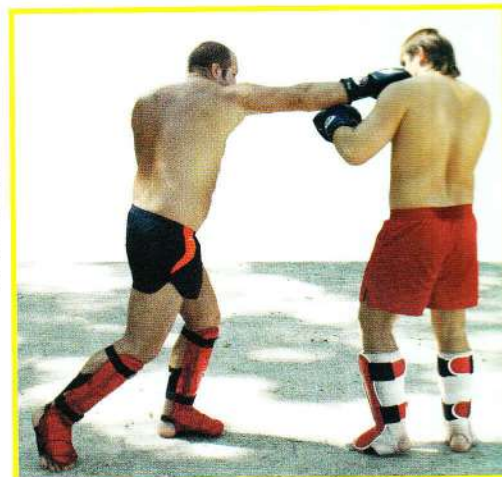
As Kirill pulls his left hand back toward his stance, I follow his hand by driving off my right leg and moving forward. At the same time, I set up the right cross by rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction. With this technique, it is very important that you follow your opponent's arm as he draws it back. Hesitating will give him a chance to reestablish his stance, block your cross, or launch another attack such as a cross of his own. Your timing has to be precise.

### KEY CONCEPTS

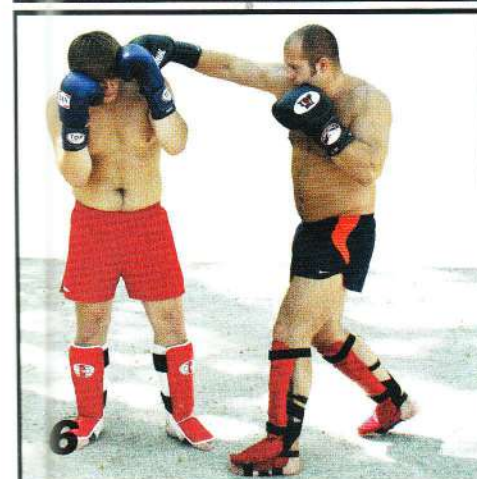
- \*Lean back just far enough to avoid the punch.
- \*Follow your opponent's jab hand as he pulls it back into his stance.
- \*The right cross is the best strike to counter with. Once it has landed, base the rest of your strikes in the combination off openings and your positioning.
- \*Drill this technique with both tall and short opponents.



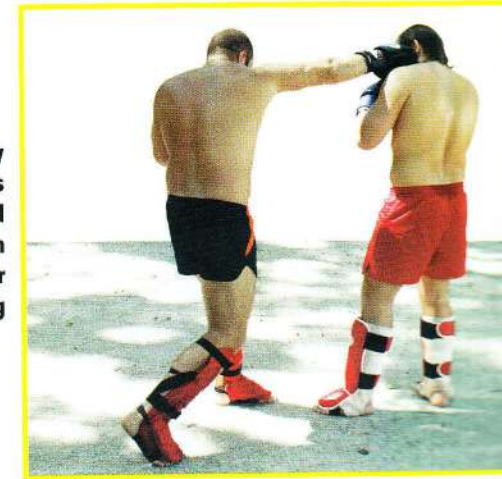
Continuing to drive off the ball of my right foot and rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I throw a right cross at Kirill's face.



The power of my right cross forces Kirill to take a step back. In order to maintain striking distance, I establish a southpaw stance by stepping my right foot forward. Immediately I come up onto the ball of my left foot, whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, and throw a left hook at Kirill's face.



I take a small step forward with my left foot, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw a right hook at Kirill's face. From here, I can continue with my attack or back away and reestablish my fighting stance.





## SLIP LEFT JAB TO LOW KICK COUNTER

This is yet another effective technique for evading your opponent's jab. Instead of slipping your head to the outside or moving your head out of range, you slip your head to the inside of the punch. Unlike the previous two evasive techniques that open a vast array of striking options, this one leaves you with just one—the right low kick. If you look at the photos in the sequence below, you'll see that as I slip my head to the inside of my opponent's jab, my body is positioned perfectly to deliver the right low kick. There is a brief moment prior to throwing the kick where I'm vulnerable to getting hit with a right cross, but I prevent my opponent from throwing the punch by stuffing his right arm. I accomplish this by extending my right hand into his right hand as I slip his jab. Once I land the kick, much of my vulnerability is eliminated because I usually knock him off balance with the blow. This not only makes it difficult for him to strike, but it also allows me to safely recover into my stance or launch another attack. It's definitely a technique you want to practice thoroughly before attempting in a fight, but once you master executing both the slip and the kick in one fluid motion, it can be a devastating counter.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



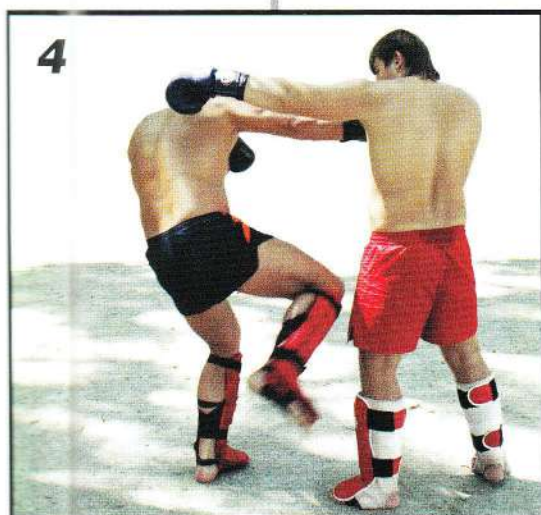
Kirill throws a left jab at my face. I slip his punch by rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head to my left side.



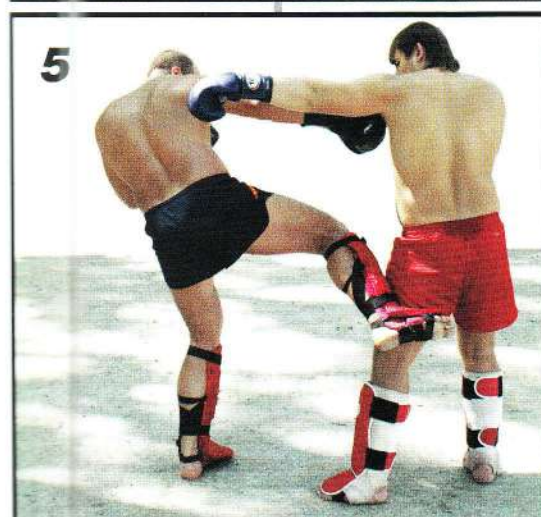
As I slip my head to the inside of Kirill's jab, I extend my right arm and place my hand on his right hand to prevent him from throwing a right cross.



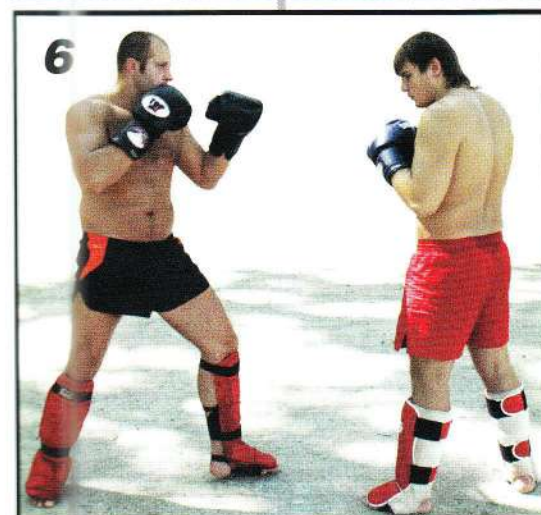
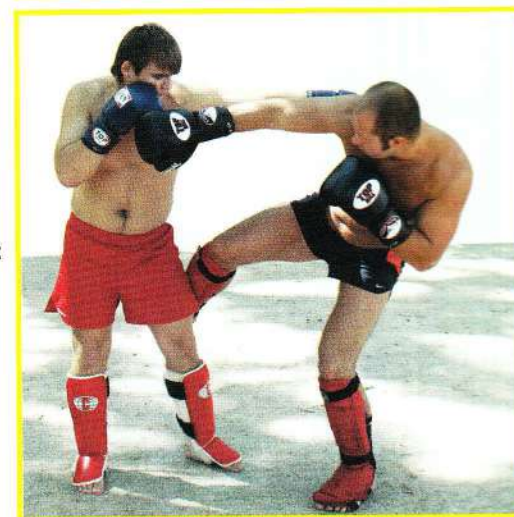




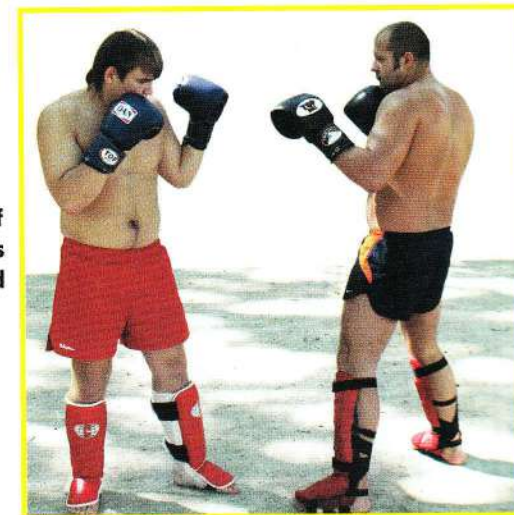
I rotate my hips in a counterclockwise direction and throw a right low kick at Kirill's left thigh. Notice that my right arm is still extended and my left arm is protecting my face.



My right low kick lands to Kirill's left thigh.



Letting my right leg rebound off Kirill's thigh, I rotate my shoulders and hips in a clockwise direction and reestablish my fighting stance.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Slip your head to the inside of your opponent's jab.
- \* Extend your right hand into your opponent's right hand to prevent him from catching you with the right cross.
- \* Execute the slip and the counterstrike in one fluid motion.
- \* Once you land the kick, pull your leg back and recover your fighting stance.



## COUNTER JAB TO SWITCH STEP TO MID KICK

This is another technique that allows you to avoid your opponent's jab and counter with a kick. It's safer than the previous technique because you stay outside of punching range, which makes it more difficult for your opponent to counter your counter, but it can be tricky to pull off. The goal is to bat your opponent's jab downward using a hand and execute a switch step at the same time. If your timing is dead on, you can deliver a powerful round kick to your opponent's exposed midsection before he can recover his stance.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



To avoid Kirill's left jab, I stuff his punch by slapping his arm down using my right hand. At the same time, I execute a switch step and reverse the positioning of my feet.



Having executed a switch step at the same time as I blocked Kirill's punch, I land in a southpaw stance.





The instant I land in a southpaw stance, I push off my left foot, pull my right shoulder back, whip my hips in a clockwise direction, and throw a left roundhouse kick at Kirill's midsection.



Having been fluid with my actions, my left shin crashes into Kirill's midsection.



I let my left leg rebound off Kirill's midsection, and then rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and reestablish my fighting stance.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Bat your opponent's jab down using your right hand and reverse the positioning of your feet at the same time.
- \* When executing the switch step, keep your lead hand up to shield your face.
- \* The instant you land in a southpaw stance, throw the kick. There should be no hesitation.
- \* After throwing the kick, either reestablish your fighting stance or move on to your next attack. A slow recovery presents an excellent opportunity for your opponent to land a strike.

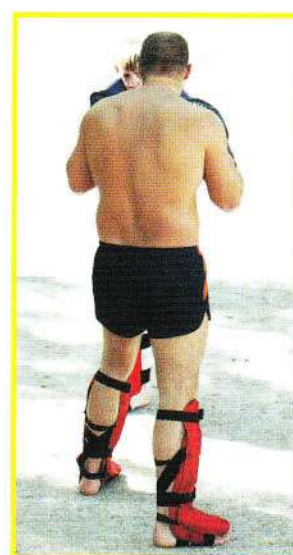


## SLIP LEFT HOOK TO RIGHT HOOK TO LOW KICK

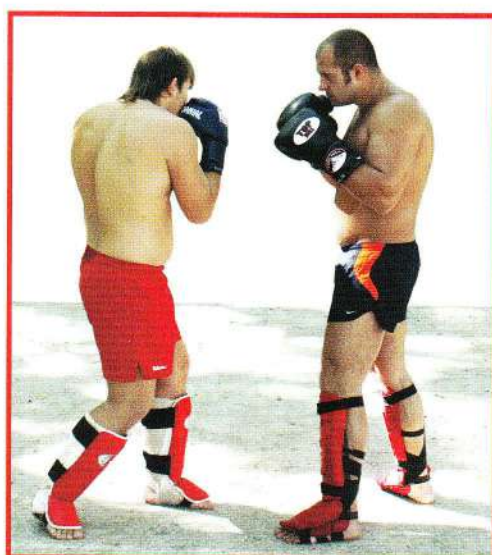
The lead left hook not only packs a tremendous amount of power, but it also comes at you from the side, making it a difficult punch to block. To avoid falling victim to this power shot, it is important to learn how to evade it. There are three primary options. You can block it with your arm, you can step out of range, or you can slip your head underneath the punch by bending at the knees and dropping your level. Blocking is the most risky out of the three. Due to the small gloves worn in MMA, it is possible for your opponent's punch to slip past your arm and connect with the side of your head even when you utilize a proper block. It's also possible to block the punch perfectly with your arm, yet still get knocked off balance, which allows your opponent to follow up with more strikes. Stepping out of range of the punch can be a great option, but it can be difficult to pull off when you are close to your opponent. To be successful with this maneuver, you have to spot the punch coming and then step all the way out of punching range before your opponent can land his strike. As a result, your best option when in punching range is to slip the lead left hook by bending at the knees and allowing the punch to pass over your head. Once you've evaded the strike, your opponent's back will be exposed. This allows you to pop back up into your stance and immediately unleash a counterattack. In the sequence below, I demonstrate one of many possible counters that you can implement upon slipping the lead left hook.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



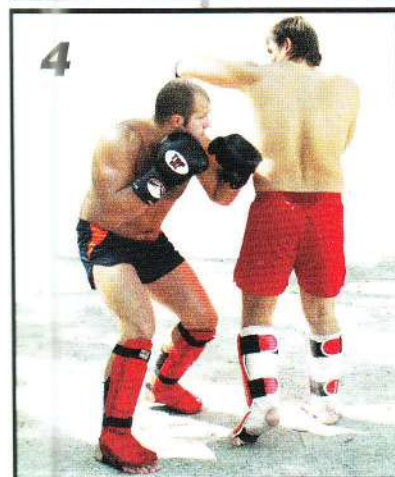
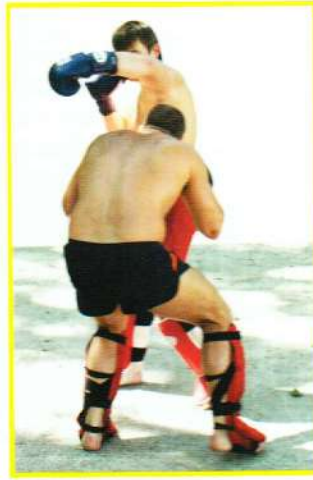
Kirill rotates his shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, alerting me to the fact that he is loading up to throw a left hook.



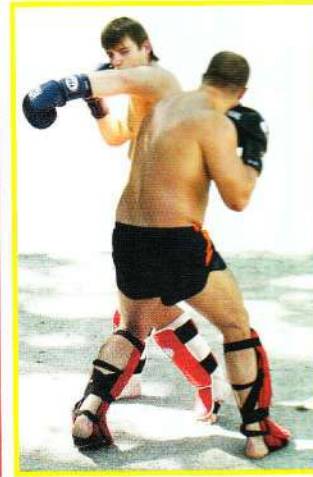




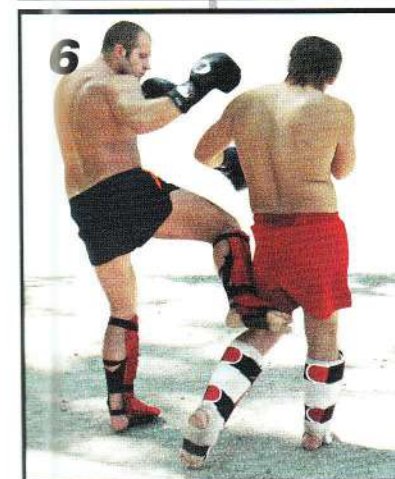
**3** Kirill whips his hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and fires a left hook at my head. As the punch comes toward me, I drop my level by bending at the knees and duck my head underneath the punch. Notice that I've kept both hands up to protect my face.



**4** Having slipped Kirill's left hook, I shift my weight to my right side to acquire a dominant angle of attack and rotate my hips in a clockwise direction to load up for the strike.



**5** Rotating my hips in a counterclockwise direction, I straighten my posture and throw a right hook at Kirill's head.



**6** Having thrown Kirill off balance, I continue my assault with a right low kick to his left thigh.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Slip the hook by bending your knees and dropping your level.
- \*As you drop down into a crouched stance, keep both of your hands up to protect your head.
- \*Once you've evaded the strike, capitalize on your opponent's awkward positioning by immediately throwing a counterstrike.



## COUNTER A CROSS WITH A CROSS

Although the cross has to cover more distance than either the jab or hook because it is thrown with the rear hand, it can still be a difficult punch to slip. If you just started training, your instincts will probably tell you to turn away from your opponent's cross, but turning into it is the proper way to slip it. The best way to reprogram these instincts is to drill slipping the cross as much as humanly possible. Once you get the hang of it, you'll notice that the movements involved in slipping the right cross are very similar to when you throw a right cross. For this reason, slipping your opponent's right cross and countering with one of your own is an excellent option. To be effective with this technique, it is important that you slip and strike at the same time. If you slip your opponent's punch and then allow him to reestablish his fighting stance, you'll have a much harder time landing the cross. Remember, any time you can disrupt your opponent's rhythm your chances at landing an attack or a series of attacks increase dramatically. However, it is important that you don't focus so intently on your counterstrike that you forget about slipping your opponent's punch. To be effective with this technique, you must first slip the cross by moving your head offline from the linear path of your opponent's right fist. To achieve this, turn your body in a counterclockwise direction and dip your head toward your left side. Once you've begun both movements, you should find it very natural to fire the cross.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Kirill throws a right cross at my head. Immediately I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, dip my head slightly to my left side, and extend my right hand toward his face. Notice how I've kept my left hand up to protect the left side of my face.



Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I come up onto the ball of my right foot and crash my right fist into Kirill's face at the exact same moment that his fist sails by the side of my head.





## SLIP CROSS WITH CROSS TO UPPERCUT

When you successfully slip your opponent's right cross and counter with a right cross of your own, the chances are the left side of his body will be momentarily exposed. With the slip having primed your hips to attack his left side, you're in a perfect position to capitalize on that exposure. Throwing a left hook or a left kick are both excellent options, but personally I like following up with a left uppercut. In the sequence below, I demonstrate how to throw the punch to both your opponent's body and head. Deciding which area to target should be based upon your positioning and which strike you think will cause the most damage.



**1** Kirill throws a right cross at my head, and I slip the punch by rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side. At the same time, I counter Kirill's strike by landing a right cross to his chin.



**2** After landing the counter right cross, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pull my right hand back into my stance, and begin throwing a left uppercut toward Kirill's face.



**3** Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I come up onto the ball of my left foot and land a left uppercut to Kirill's chin.



## UPPERCUT TO THE BODY



**1** Kirill throws a right cross at my head, and I slip the punch by rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side. At the same time, I counter Kirill's strike by throwing a right cross toward his chin.



**2** After landing the counter right cross, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pull my right hand back into my stance, and begin throwing a left uppercut toward Kirill's liver.



**3** Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I land my left uppercut to Kirill's liver.

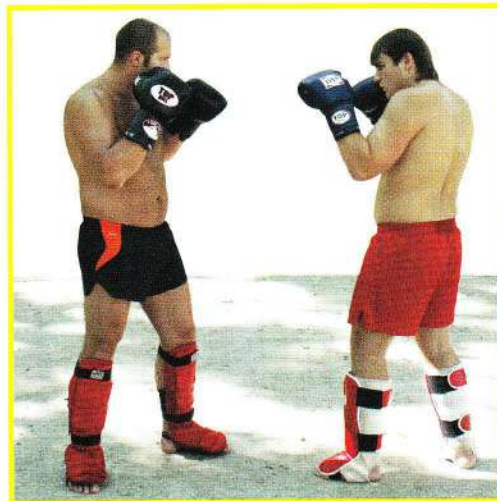


## SLIP CROSS TO THREE-PUNCH COMBO COUNTER

In the previous sequence I demonstrated how to slip a right cross, counter with a cross of your own, and then follow up with a left uppercut. I begin this sequence with the same punches, but instead of staying to my opponent's side as I throw the uppercut, I take a step to square my body up with his. Not only does this change the angle of my attack, but it also prevents him from escaping my combination by sidestepping. As I launch my combination, he will be forced backward. And once I have him backpedaling, it will be difficult for him to land effective counterstrikes.



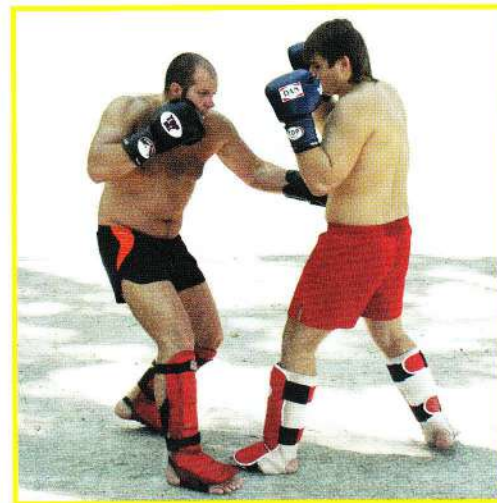
I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Kirill throws a right cross at my head, and I slip the punch by rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side. At the same time, I counter Kirill's strike by landing a right cross to his chin.



Rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I pull my right hand back into my stance, step my right foot to the outside of Kirill's left foot, and throw a left uppercut to his solar plexus.



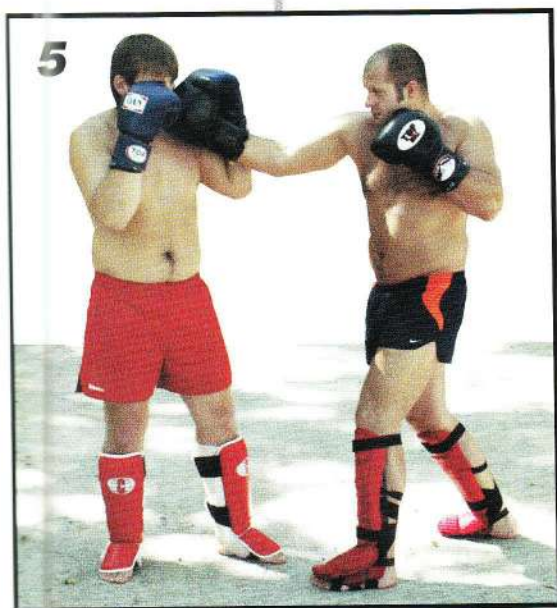




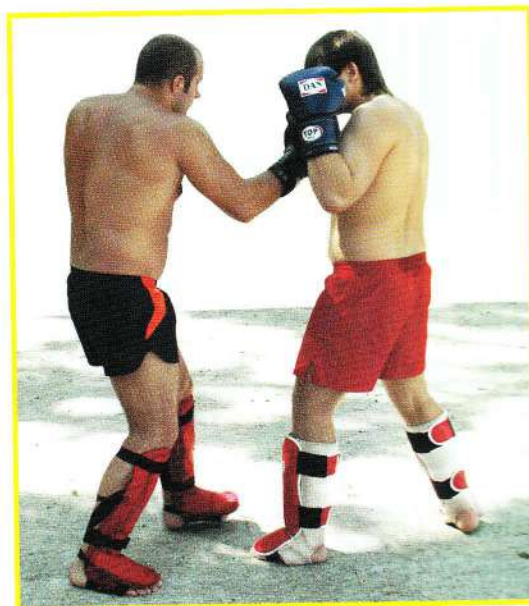
I shift my weight onto my right leg and begin rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

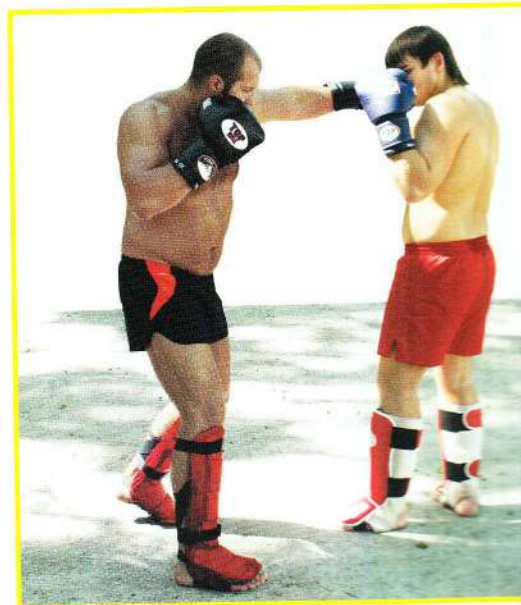
- \*Slip your head offline from your opponent's cross, and then use the movements of the slip to throw the counter right cross.
- \*When barreling forward with your combination, take small steps to the outside of your opponent's centerline to force him to retreat backward.
- \*After each strike, pull your punching hand back into its position in your fighting stance.



I pull my left hand back into my stance, step my left foot forward, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw a right uppercut to Kirill's chin.



The instant I land the right uppercut, I take a small step forward with my right foot, pull my right hand back into my stance, rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, come up onto the ball of my left foot, and throw a left hook at Kirill's head.



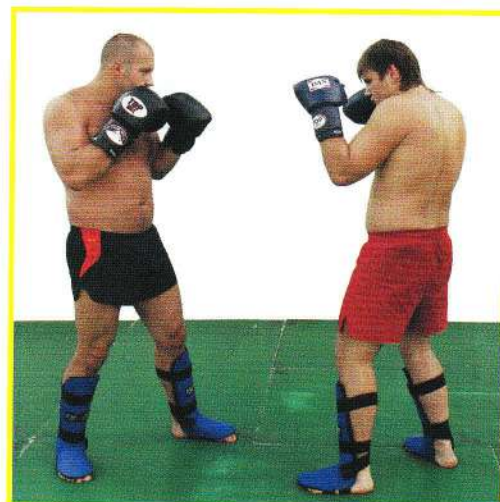


## SLIP CROSS TO THREE-PUNCH COMBO (COUNTER 2)

It's wise not to create patterns. If every time your opponent throws a cross you slip his punch and counter with a right cross to the face, he will eventually catch on. To keep him guessing, occasionally throw the counter cross to his body. It can be a very effective technique because a lot of times the body blow will cause your opponent to momentarily drop his hands, which makes his head vulnerable for your next strike. The movements involved in throwing a cross to his body are the same as when you go to his head, but if your opponent is the same height as you or shorter, you may have to drop your level by bending at the knees. This will keep your arm level with your shoulders and ensure that you land a powerful shot. In the sequence below, I follow up with a left uppercut, but there are several other left-handed strikes that can be just as effective.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



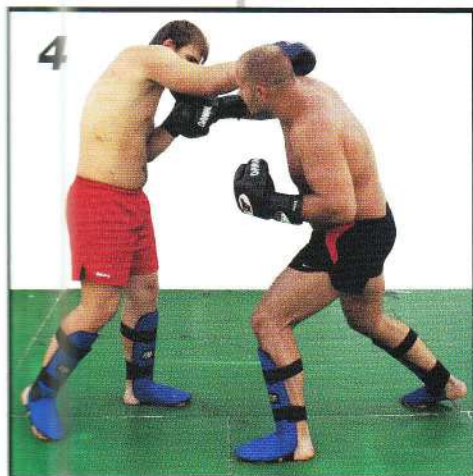
Kirill rotates his hips in a counterclockwise direction and begins throwing his right hand at my head. Reading his movements, I immediately begin to slip his right cross by dipping my head to my left side and rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction.



Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I drop my level by bending at the knees and throw a straight right cross to Kirill's solar plexus.



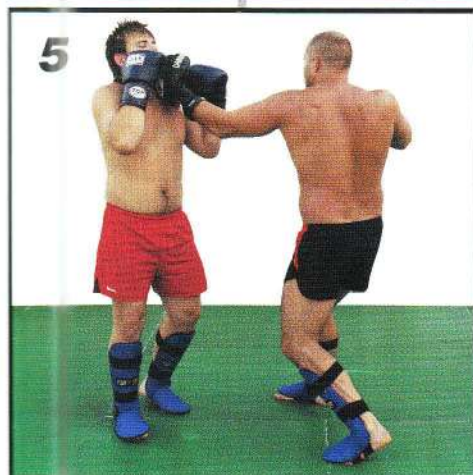




The instant I land the right cross to Kirill's body, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and prepare to throw a left uppercut at his face.



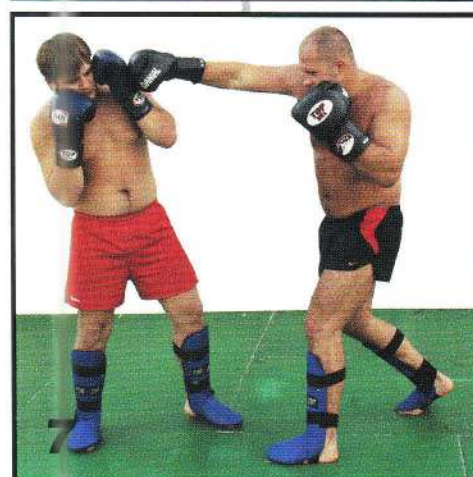
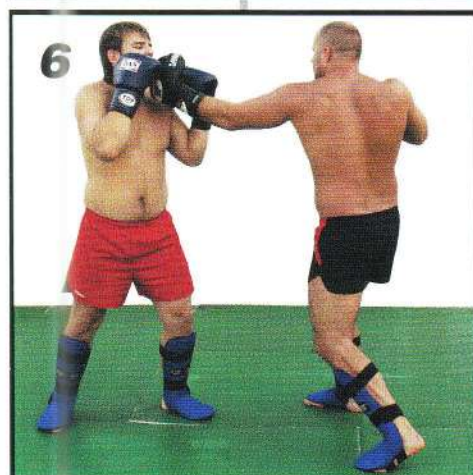
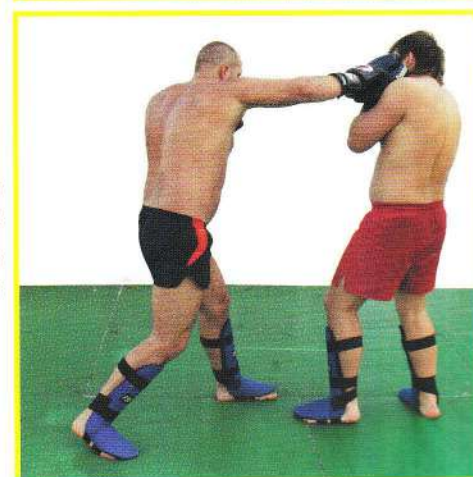
In order to acquire the angle needed to land the left uppercut, I take a small step forward with my right foot. At the same time, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pull my right hand back into my stance, and throw a left uppercut at Kirill's chin.



The impact of the uppercut forces Kirill to take a step backward.



I continue with my assault by stepping my left foot forward, rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, pulling my left hand back into my stance, and throwing a right cross at Kirill's head.





## COUNTER CROSS WITH BACKSTEP CROSS

Sometimes the best way to avoid the cross is to move out of range by taking a step backward. It's a very simple technique as far as movement, but it requires great timing and a good sense of distance. Just like when slipping the jab using the back-step method, you only want to move far enough away to avoid getting hit. How large of a step you take should be based upon your proximity to your opponent and the length of his reach. If you're standing just inside of his reach, avoiding his punch can be as simple as leaning backward. If you're standing close to him when he launches his cross, you'll have to take a large step backward. However, it is important to remember that your opponent is simply throwing his fist forward while you're moving your entire body backward. If your opponent doesn't telegraph his punches and you're standing in close range, trying to move away from his punch most likely won't work. In such a situation, you're best bet is to slip the strike.

Acquiring the proper timing and sense of distance to evade a cross by back-stepping can take some time, but it is well worth the investment. Once you feel comfortable with this technique, the next goal is to train yourself to follow your opponent's hand as he pulls it back toward his body and throw a counterstrike. In this particular case, the best counterstrike to throw is a cross. It's possible to throw a jab, but with your opponent's right arm retracting, it can be difficult to sneak your jab over the top of his arm and connect cleanly with your target. It's also not nearly as powerful of a punch. Countering the cross with a cross is always a good bet. Once you land the strike, your opponent will get knocked backward and his balance will be compromised. This allows you to either continue your assault of strikes or work for a takedown.



**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** Kirill throws a right cross at my face. Immediately I drive off my left foot and step my right foot backward.



As Kirill extends his right arm, I distribute my weight onto my right leg and lean back. Notice how I've positioned my head just out of striking range.







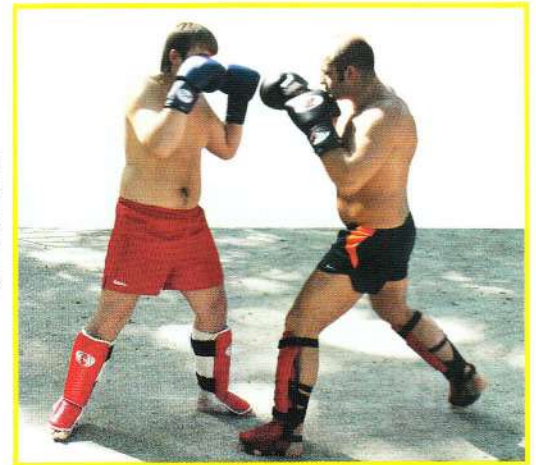
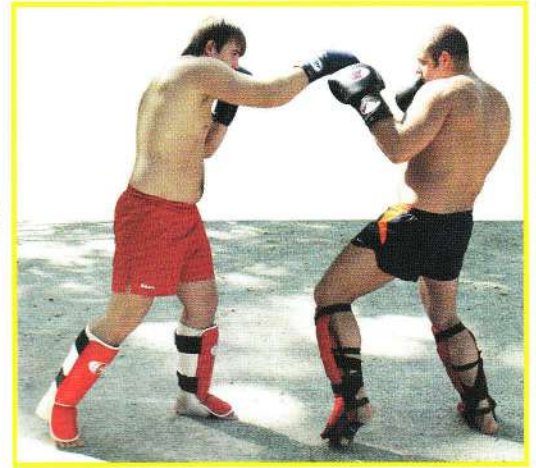
As Kirill pulls his right hand back toward his body, I drive forward off my right foot.



Still driving off my right foot, I step my left foot forward, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw a right cross toward Kirill's head.



Distributing a larger portion of my weight onto my left leg, I extend my right arm and land a powerful cross to Kirill's face.



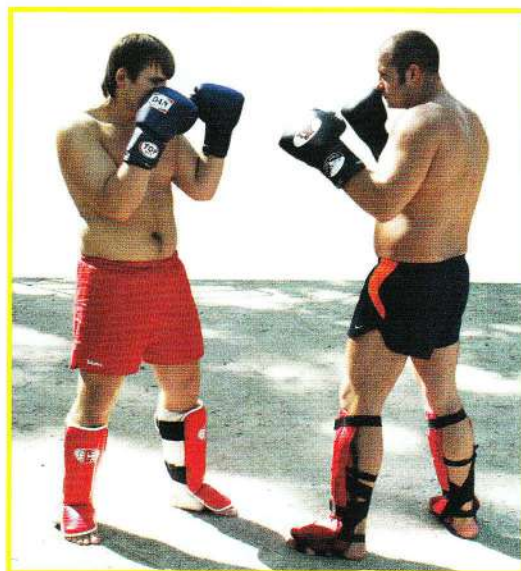
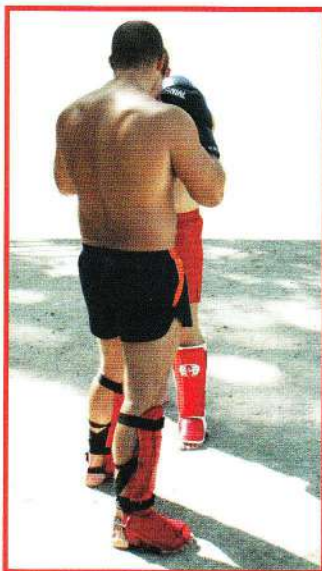
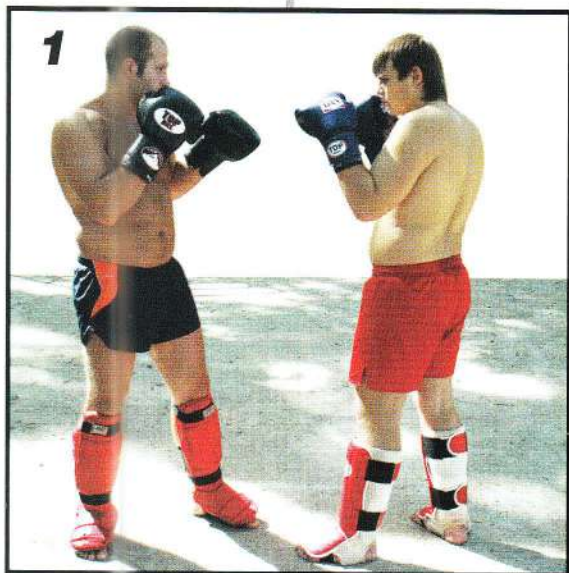
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Before using this technique, develop the timing and sense of distance it requires through drilling.
- \*Just move out of range of the punch, no more. Leaning or stepping back too far will lessen your chances of landing a counterstrike.
- \*Follow your opponent's hand as he pulls it back toward his body. Sometimes this may require taking a step forward.
- \*If you lag throwing your counterstrike, your opponent will have a chance to reestablish his fighting stance and throw another strike as you come forward.
- \*Drill this technique with a wide variety of people. If all your training partners are short and you attempt this technique against a tall fighter in the cage, there is a good chance you'll get hit.

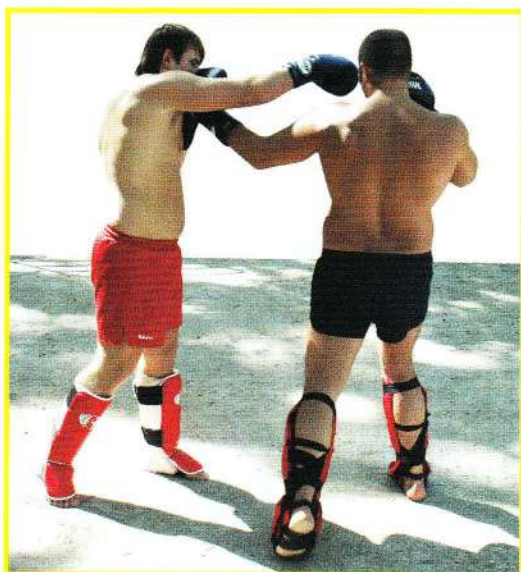
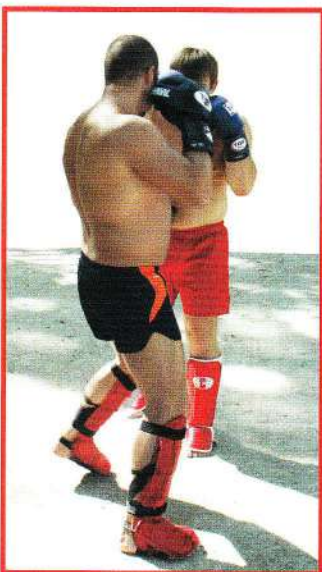
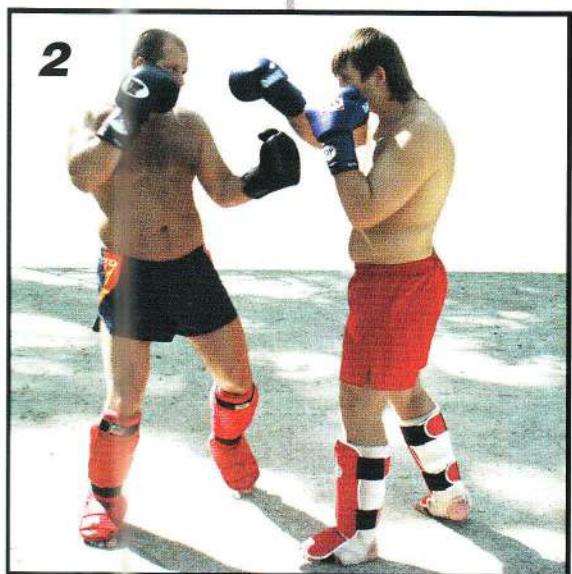


## COUNTER CROSS WITH SIDESTEP UPPERCUT

On the previous pages I've demonstrated how to slip a right cross, as well as how to evade a right cross by utilizing a back-step. In this sequence I demonstrate how to dodge a right cross by sidestepping. It's similar to slipping in that you evade your opponent's strike and launch your counterstrike at the same time, but it is more advanced because instead of just moving your head offline from your opponent's strike, you move your entire body. One of the biggest advantages to utilizing this type of technique is that you change your angle. One second you're standing in front of your opponent, and the next second you're standing off to his side. In order to fend off your strikes or launch an effective attack, your opponent must readjust his stance, but before he can accomplish that, you've already landed your counter and followed up with several more strikes.

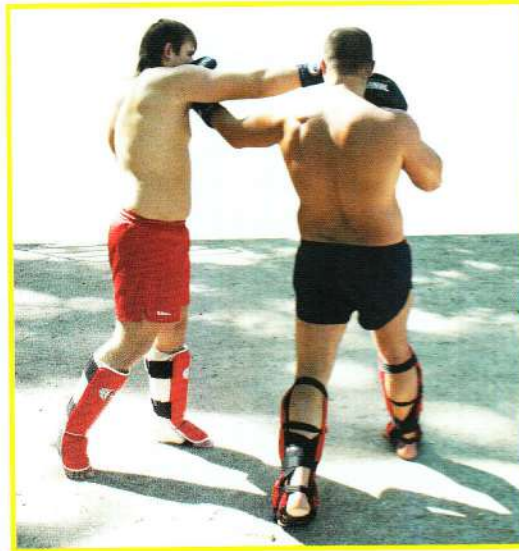
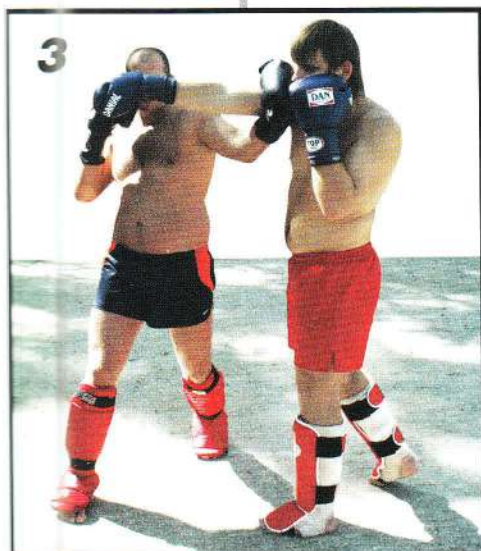


I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.

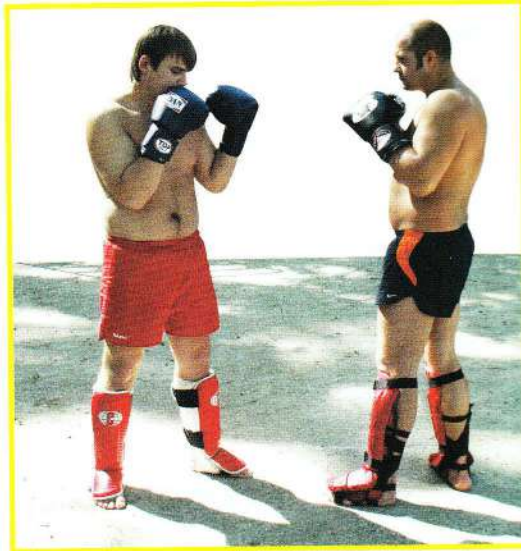
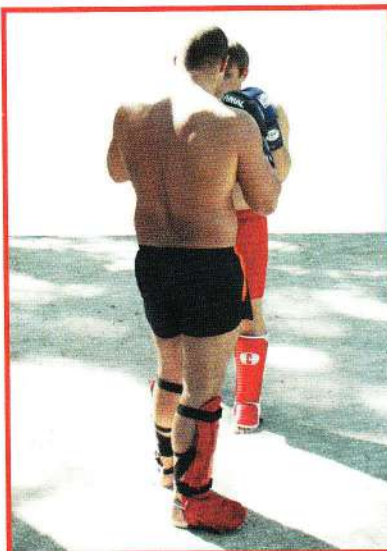
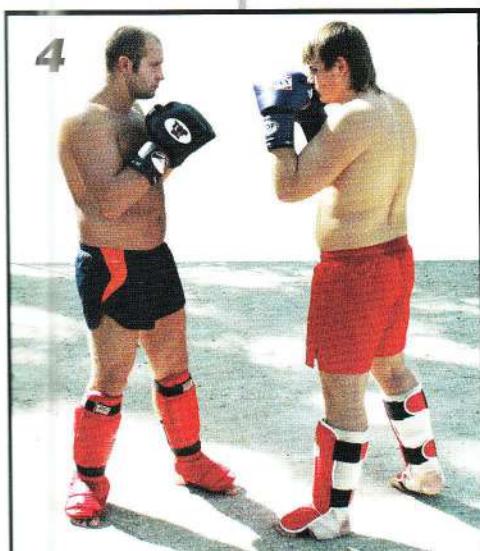


Kirill throws a straight right cross at my head. Immediately I take a small outward step with my left foot to move my head offline from his punch, and then I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and throw a left uppercut at his chin.





In one fluid motion, I pivot on the ball of my left foot, lean back slightly, and land my left uppercut to Kirill's chin. Notice that I've landed the punch just as he fully extends his right arm. From here, I can follow up with another attack or reestablish my fighting stance.



I reestablish my fighting stance by stepping my left foot toward my right and pulling my left hand toward my body.

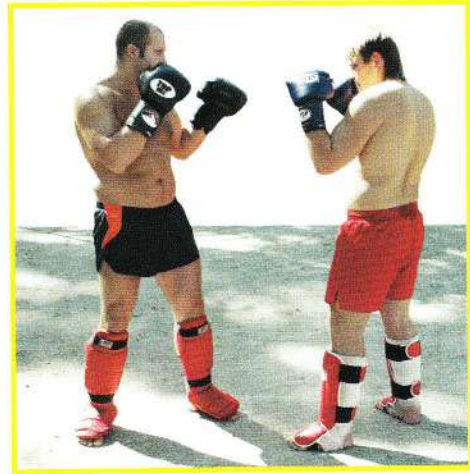
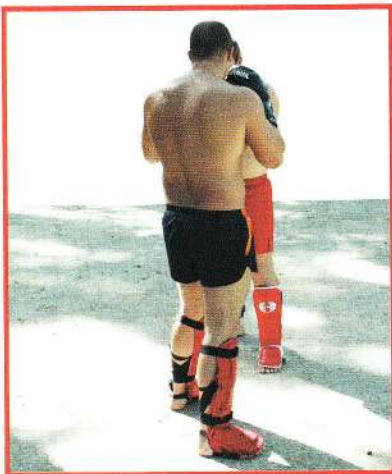
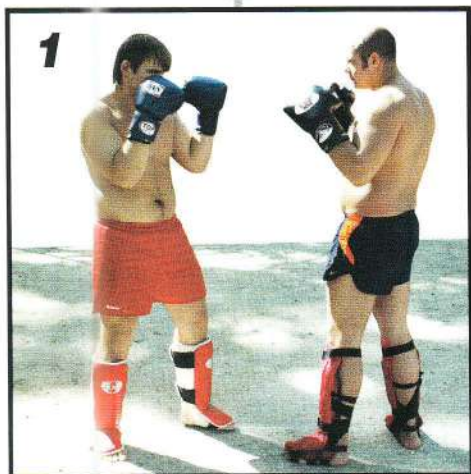
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Step your body offline from your opponent's punch first. Once accomplished, use the movement of your sidestep to throw a left uppercut. The goal is to land your strike as your opponent's punch sails by your head.
- \* Keep your right hand up to protect your head.
- \* The instant you land your counter, either follow up with another attack or return to your fighting stance.

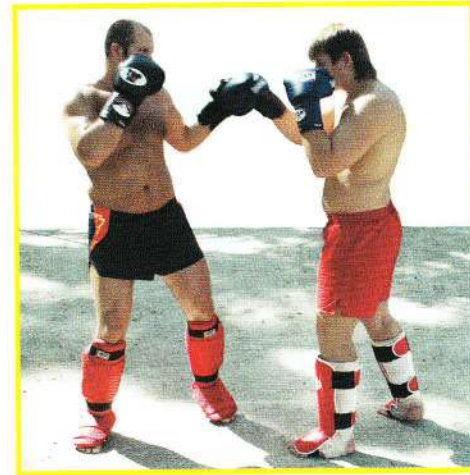
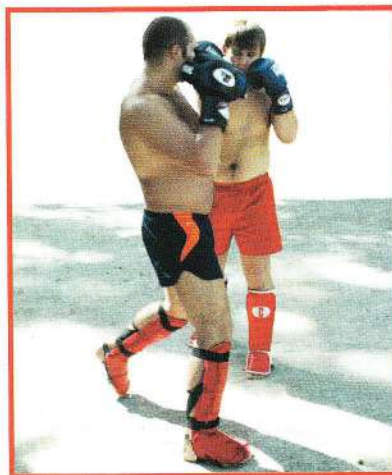


## COUNTER CROSS WITH SIDESTEP LEAD HOOK

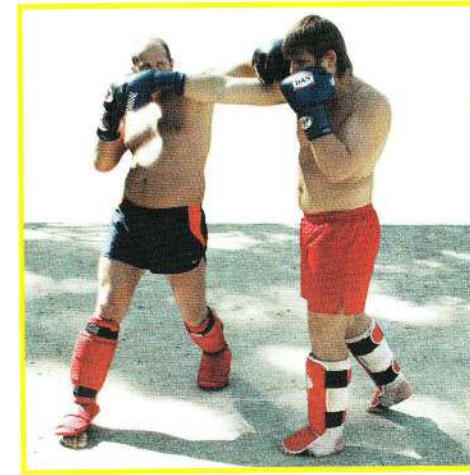
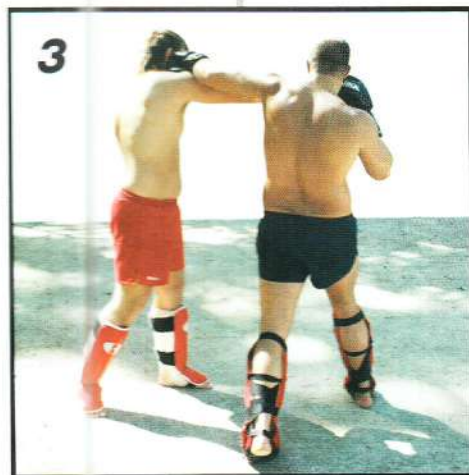
In the previous technique I demonstrated how to sidestep your opponent's cross and counter with an uppercut. Here I show how to sidestep the cross and counter with a left hook. The only real difference is that instead of throwing your counter underneath your opponent's arm, you throw it over the top of his arm. Whichever counter you choose, it is important that you land your strike just as your opponent misses his and then immediately follow up with another attack or return to your fighting stance.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Kirill throws a straight right cross at my head. Immediately I take a small outward step with my left foot to move my head offline from his punch, and then I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and throw a left hook at the right side of his head.

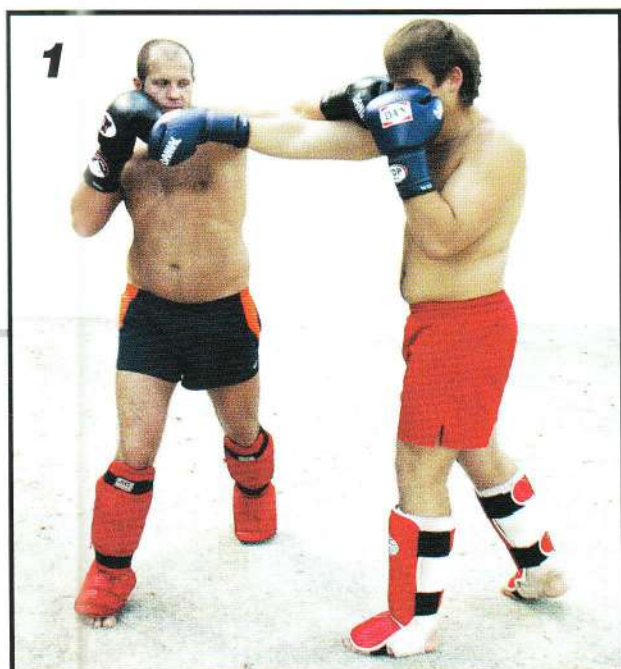


In one fluid motion, I pivot on the ball of my left foot, lean back slightly, and land my left hook to the right side of Kirill's head. Notice how I've landed the punch just as Kirill fully extends his right arm. From here, I can follow up with another attack or reestablish my fighting stance.



## COUNTER CROSS WITH SIDESTEP LEAD HOOK COMBO

Once you understand how to counter the cross by sidestepping and throwing either a left uppercut or left hook, it's time to practice following up with a combination. In the sequence below, you'll notice that I unleash three punches after countering the cross with a left hook. I send the first follow-up punch to my opponent's body, and the next two to his head. By going high, low, and then high again, I confuse my opponent and increase the likelihood that I'll land each of my strikes. In my opinion, body shots aren't used nearly enough in MMA. With only small gloves covering your fists, it's not difficult to break ribs or take the wind from your opponent's sail. At the very least, you'll steal some of his focus away from guarding his head.



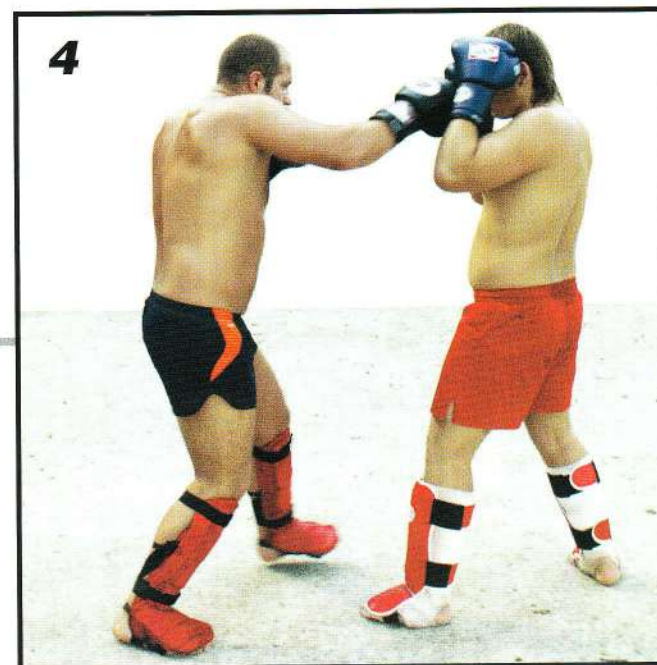
**1** I've successfully countered Kirill's right cross by sidestepping to my left and throwing a left hook to the right side of his head.



**2** Before Kirill can reestablish his stance, I step my left foot forward, draw my left hand back into my stance, rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, pivot on my right foot, and throw a right uppercut to his midsection.



**3** Having hurt Kirill with the body blow, I step my right foot forward, pull my right hand back into my stance, rotate my hips in a clockwise direction, and throw a left uppercut to his chin.

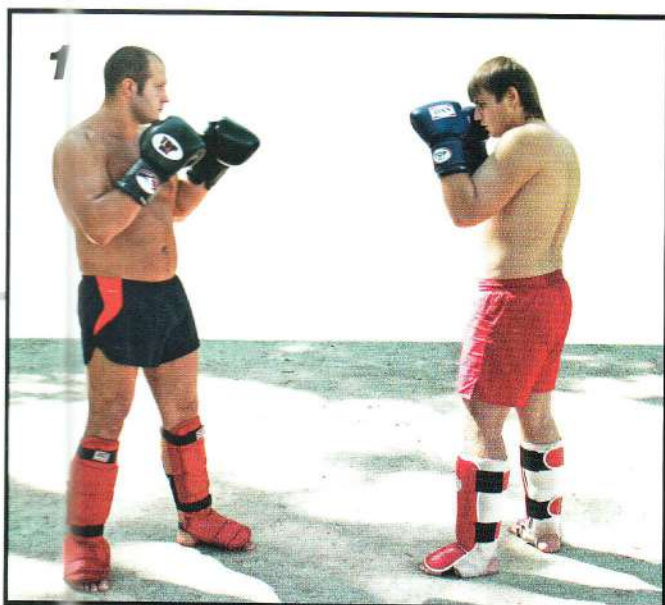


**4** I step my left foot forward, rotate my hips in a counterclockwise direction, and sneak a right cross between Kirill's arms. From here, I will either throw another attack or back away and reestablish my fighting stance.



## CHECK LOW KICK TO CROSS/HOOK/KICK COMBO

At the beginning of the book I demonstrated how to check your opponent's low kicks using your lead leg. In this sequence, I show how to follow the check with a cross, a hook, and then an outside low kick. The most important part about this combination is making sure that you properly block your opponent's kick. If you focus on your attack prematurely and his kick finds its target, you'll get thrust off balance, making it difficult to initiate your attack. The goal is to catch your opponent with one leg in the air, and the best way to accomplish that is to throw an attack from your right side. Once you land your first strike, which in this case is a right cross, your opponent is bound to stagger backward on his one grounded leg, opening up numerous striking possibilities and targets. In this particular case I utilize a hook and then an outside low kick, which follows the low-high principal, but it is important to experiment to discover what works best for you.



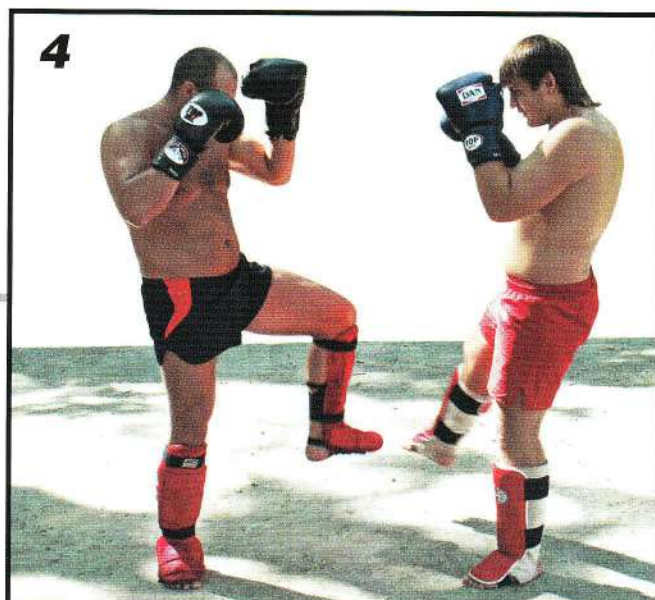
**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** Kirill throws a right low kick at my left thigh. Immediately I lift my left foot off the ground and point my knee to my left side at a forty-five-degree angle.

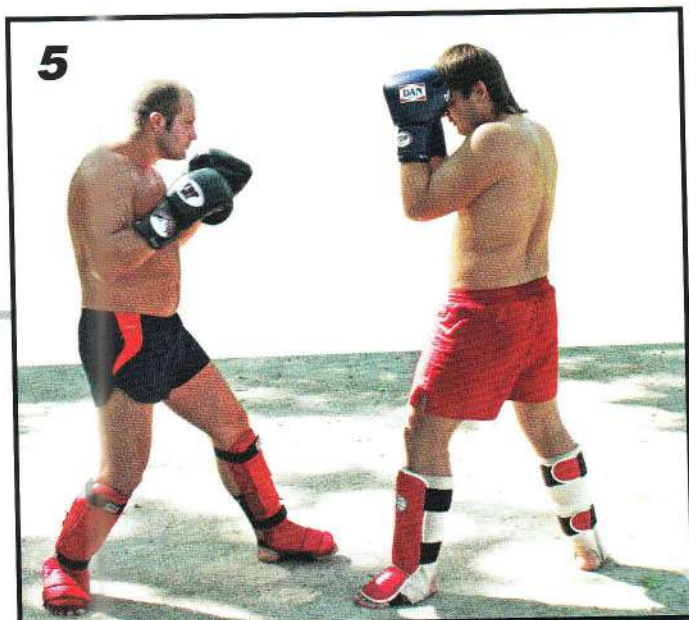


**3** Having timed Kirill's kick and executed a proper check, his leg connects with the center portion of my shin.

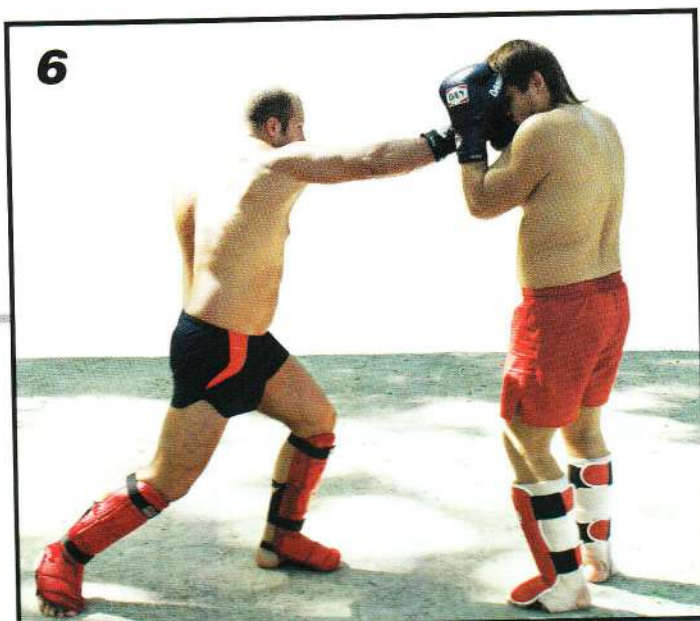


**4** I drop my left foot toward the ground.





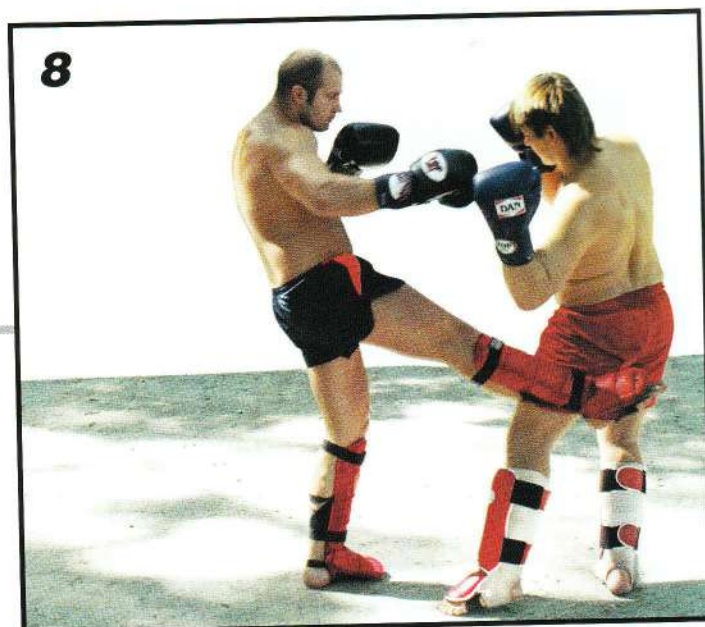
**5** The instant my left foot touches the ground, I begin throwing the cross by rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction.



**6** I throw a powerful right cross to Kirill's face.



**7** Having knocked Kirill backward and off balance with my right cross, I pull my right arm back into my stance, rotate my hips in a clockwise direction, slide my right leg toward my left, and throw a left hook toward his face.



**8** Kirill has eaten two powerful punches to his head. Discombobulated, he keeps his hands up to protect himself from taking further blows to his face. To switch things up, I follow the hook with a right low kick by pulling my left shoulder back and thrusting my right hip forward.

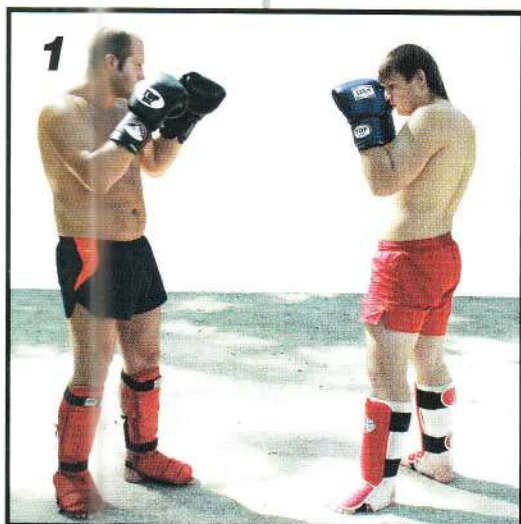
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Properly check your opponent's kick before moving on to your attack.
- \* If you block a right low kick with your left leg, throw a counterattack from your right side.
- \* After checking your opponent's kick, avoid getting too spread out when you drop your foot.

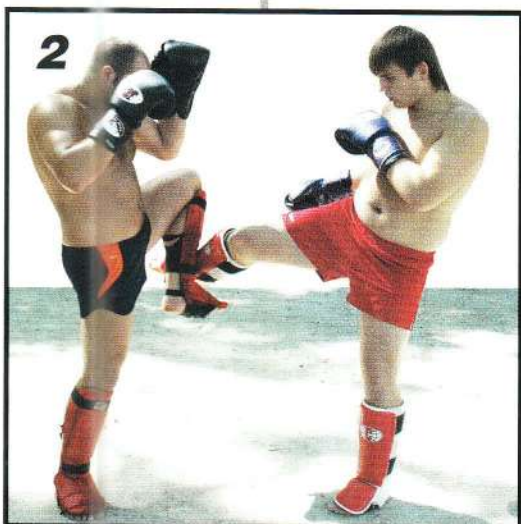
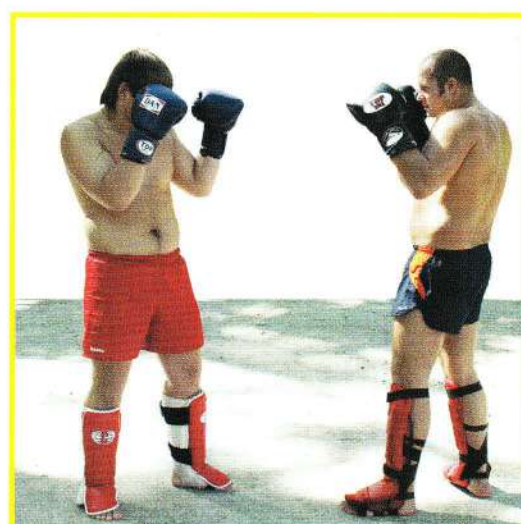


## CHECK OUTSIDE LOW KICK TO STRAIGHT KNEE

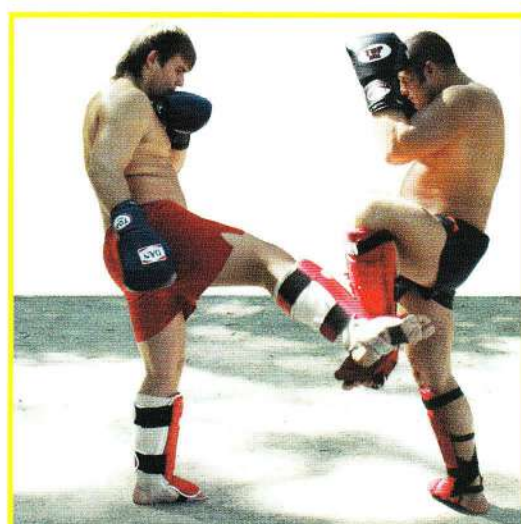
It usually takes longer for your opponent to reestablish his stance after throwing a kick than it takes you to reestablish your stance after checking his kick. As a result, launching a counterattack immediately after employing a check is almost always a good option. In the previous sequence I demonstrated how to follow up with a right cross, and in this sequence I demonstrate how to follow up by grabbing your opponent's head and delivering a powerful knee strike to his midsection. If you look at the photos below, you'll notice that after checking I step my lead leg forward and elongate my stance. Although in most situations it is important to avoid getting too spread out, in this case it allows me to generate more power behind my knee strike. Once you land the knee, you can disengage from the clinch and resume your fighting stance, which is what I do below, or you can stay in the clinch and continue your attack. To see some of your clinching options, flip to the Muay Thai clinch section later in the book.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Kirill throws a right low kick. Immediately I elevate my left foot off the ground, point my knee toward my left side at a forty-five-degree angle, and catch his kick with my shin.







Having executed a proper check and maintained my balance, I step my left foot forward.



The instant my left foot hits the ground, I establish a Muay Thai clinch by leaning forward and wrapping both of my hands around the back of Kirill's head.



I pull Kirill's head down using both of my hands and drive a straight right knee into his midsection.



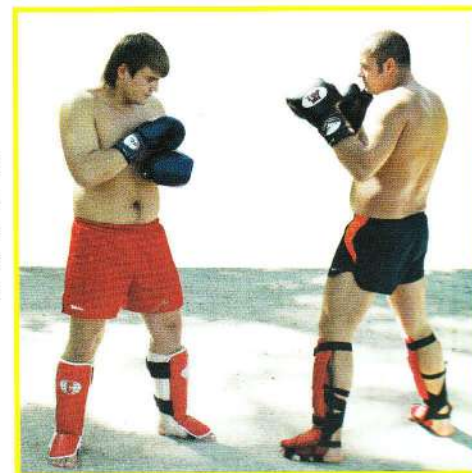
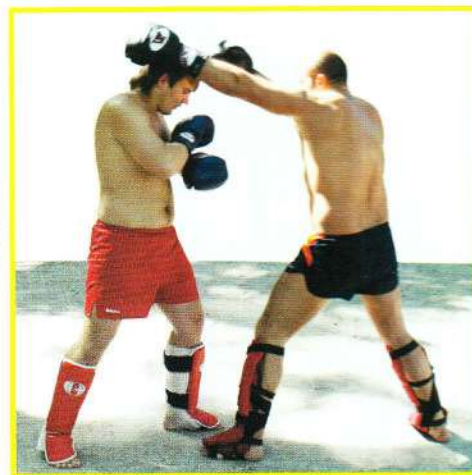
I release my grip on Kirill's head and reestablish my fighting stance. Notice how my knee strike has caused him to drop his hands low. This presents a perfect opportunity to throw a strike at his head.

### KEY CONCEPTS

\*Properly check your opponent's kick before moving on to your attack.

\*After checking the kick, step your lead foot forward and establish the Muay Thai clinch. Next, rip your opponent's head down and drive in a knee strike.

\*Once you land the knee strike, disengage and resume your fighting stance or use your grip on your opponent's head to steer his body and force him off balance. When done properly, it will create opportunities to land more knee strikes.





## COUNTER RIGHT LOW KICK WITH OVERHAND

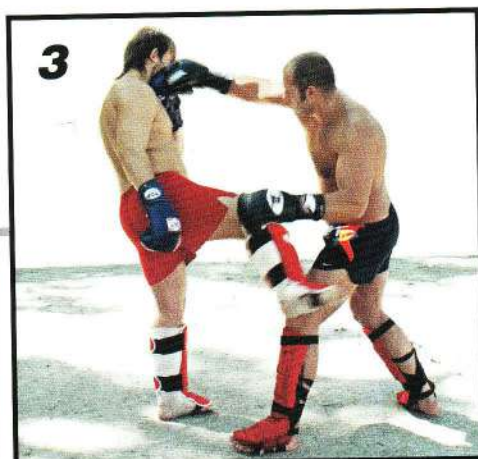
A lot of fighters will drop their hands as they come barreling forward with a hard right low kick. If you notice this chink in your opponent's armor, the technique demonstrated below can prove highly effective. Instead of checking his low kick, you step your lead foot forward, throw an overhand right, and catch your opponent's leg with your lead hand. The goal is to land your overhand just prior to your opponent landing his kick. Not only does this dramatically reduce the power behind the kick, but it also knocks him off balance. Timing is crucial. A linear punch is quicker than a circular kick, but not by much. In order for this technique to work, you have to be able to read your opponent's movements and spot the kick coming. For this reason, it is usually wise to check the first several low kicks your opponent throws. Once you feel comfortable reading his movements and are sure he has the bad habit of dropping his hands, pull this technique out of your arsenal. In addition to causing a significant amount of damage with the overhand, you'll also have control of his leg. If your goal is to take the fight to the ground, you can use that control to execute a takedown. If your goal is to keep the fight standing, you can simply release his leg and reestablish your fighting stance. The one thing you don't want to do is overuse this technique because it creates a pattern your opponent can capitalize upon. If every time he kicks low you catch his leg and throw an overhand, there is a good chance he'll fake a leg kick to get you to drop your hands and then crash his shin into the side of your unprotected head.



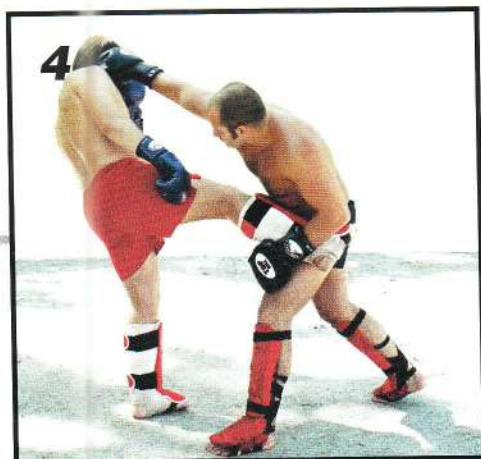
**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** Kirill drops his hands slightly, angles his left foot toward his left side, and begins rotating his hips in a counterclockwise direction. These movements tell me that he is about to throw a low kick at my lead leg. Instead of checking his kick, I decide to counter by throwing an overhand right.



**3** I step my left foot forward, drop my left hand to catch Kirill's leg upon impact, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw an overhand right at his face. Having read his movements and reacted quickly, my punch connects before his kick lands to my leg, reducing much of its power.



**4** Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I follow through with my punch and connect hard. A split second later, Kirill's kick lands with reduced power and I catch his leg with my left arm. Notice how my punch has knocked him off balance and prevented him from recovering his stance. From here I can either release his leg or execute a takedown.

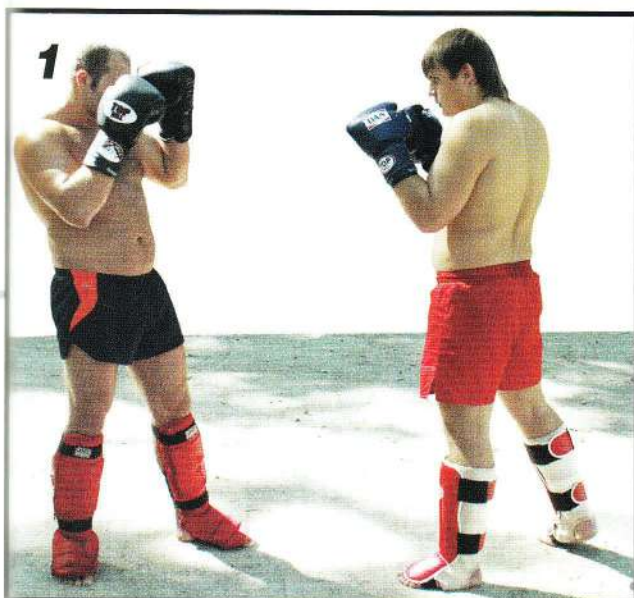
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Step into your opponent's kick instead of away from it.
- \* Time the overhand so that it lands just prior to your opponent's kick.
- \* Catch your opponent's kick as it lands to prevent him from reestablishing his fighting stance.
- \* Use caution when utilizing this counter.
- \* If your opponent protects his head when he executes low kicks, it's best to check his kick instead of using this counter.
- \* Practice this technique tirelessly in the gym to develop proper timing.

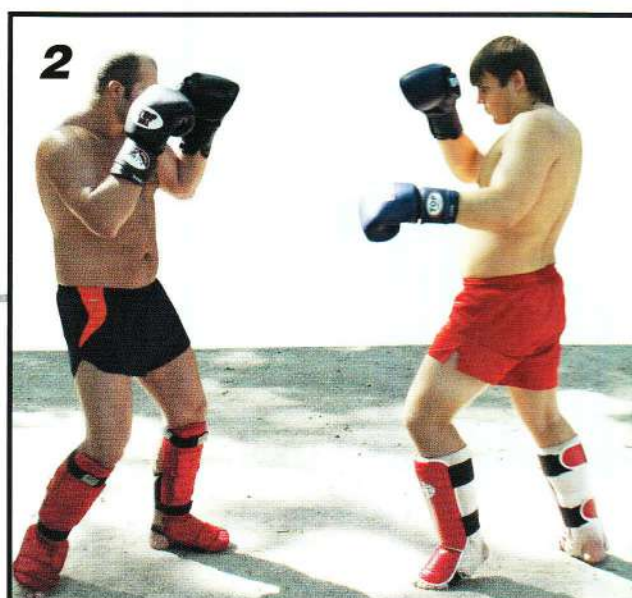


## COUNTER RIGHT HIGH KICK WITH LEFT LOW KICK

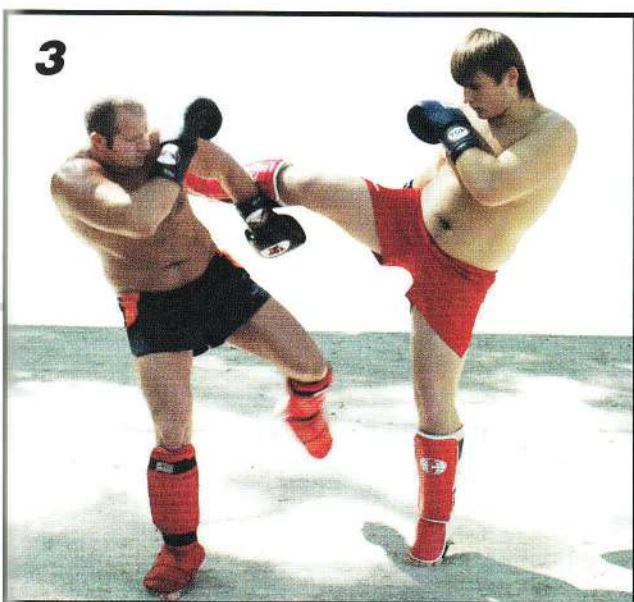
This technique is similar to the previous one in that you use a counter strike to hinder your opponent's kick. However, instead of using a punch to disrupt his strike, you kick his grounded leg. In the sequence below I demonstrate how to use this technique when your opponent throws a right kick aimed at your head, and in the sequence that follows I show how it can be used when your opponent throws a left kick aimed at your ribs. In both cases the goal is to kick your opponent's grounded leg out from underneath him, eliminating all power in his kick and sending him to the mat. Even if your opponent should maintain his base, landing your kick first will seriously reduce the power behind his kick and cause his grounded leg serious damage. The key to being successful with this technique is learning how to read your opponent's movements and developing the timing it takes to beat him to impact. If you're off by even a fraction of a second, you could be in for some hurt.



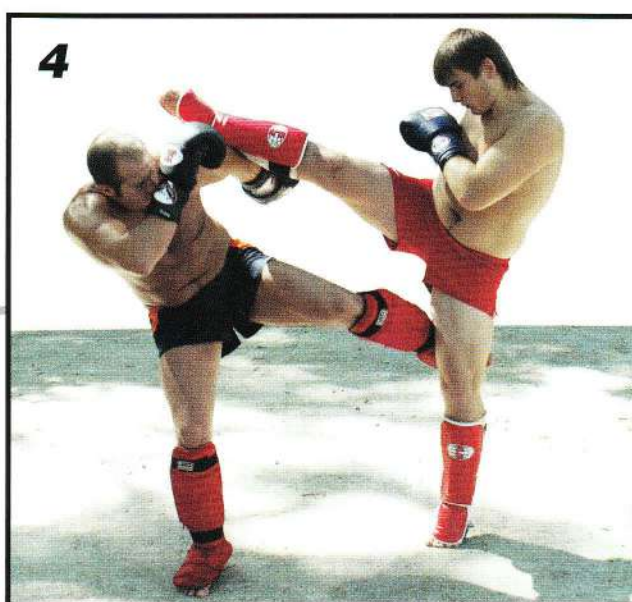
**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** Kirill telegraphs a right kick by coming up onto the ball of his left foot, dropping his left hand, and rotating his body in a counterclockwise direction.



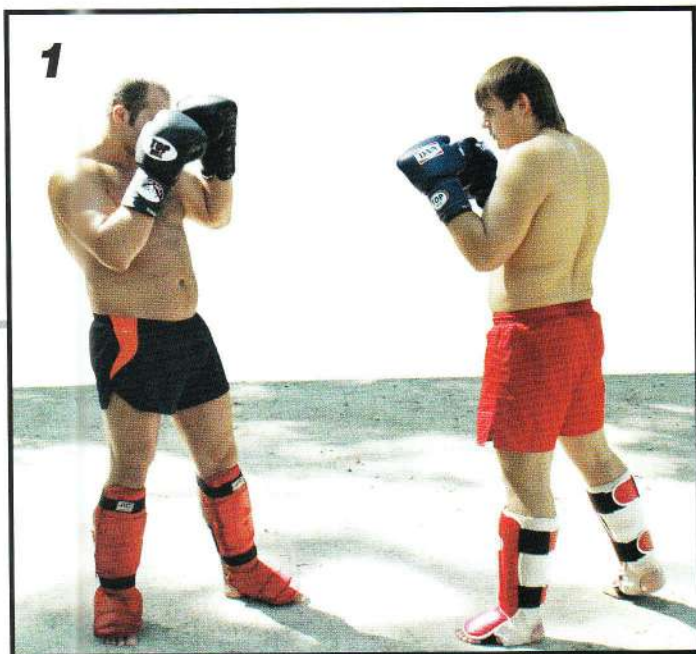
**3** Kirill throws a right kick toward my head. Instantly I move into my counter by pulling my right shoulder back, whipping my hips in a clockwise direction, and throwing a left low kick toward the inside of his left thigh. Notice how I throw my left arm behind me and move my right arm across my face. This not only allows me to generate momentum for my counterstrike, but also protect myself from Kirill's kick.



**4** Before Kirill's high kick lands, I deliver a powerful low kick to the inside of his left thigh.



## COUNTER LEFT KICK WITH RIGHT LOW KICK



I'm squared off with Kirill.



Kirill throws a left round kick at my midsection. Immediately I set myself up to throw a right low kick at his grounded leg by pulling my left shoulder back and rotating my hips in a counterclockwise direction.



Before Kirill can land his left round kick, I deliver a powerful inside low kick to his right thigh. Not only does this cause his leg an ample amount of damage, but I have also seriously reduced the power behind his kick.

### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*If your opponent throws a right kick, counter with a left kick. If he throws a left kick, counter with a right kick.
- \*Land your kick to your opponent's grounded leg before he can land his kick.
- \*To inflict the most damage, target your opponent's upper thigh or lower calf muscle.
- \*If your kick doesn't sweep your opponent to the mat, either continue forward with an attack or return your leg to its proper position in your stance.



# STRIKING ATTACKS

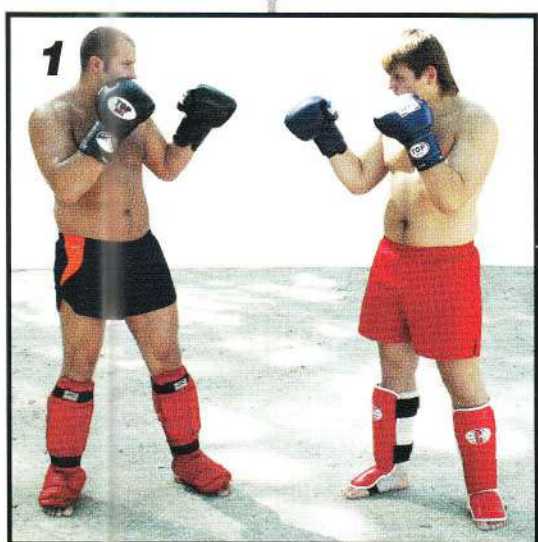
In this day and age it is very difficult to knock your opponent out by throwing single-strike attacks. Although sometimes your punch will land, the majority of the time your opponent will counter it in one way or another. To cause the damage you desire, you must utilize combinations, and to be effective with combinations, you must train yourself to foresee your opponent's reaction to your first strike and then base your second strike on that reaction. For example, throwing a kick to your opponent's leg is an excellent way to get him to drop his guard. Even if he checks the kick, you'll most likely have succeeded in steering a portion of his focus toward the lower half of his body. This increases your chances of landing a punch to his face. The instant you strike his jaw or nose, his focus will return to his upper body, allowing you to attack his lower body again with your third strike. The goal is to keep your opponent guessing by constantly switching things up and attacking his weaknesses. If he is terrible at checking high kicks, utilize combinations that end with a kick to the head. If he is terrible at blocking uppercuts, punch your way into the pocket and then throw your fist straight up the middle. Lunging into the pocket and firing a single jab or cross before retreating won't cut it.

I've broken this section into two parts. The first focuses on the hand attacks that I use to break the distance between my opponent and me. Although most of the combinations are quite simple, they are highly effective and will give you an idea of how to blend your punches together as though they were a single technique. The second part offers combinations that involve both punching and kicking. I recommend learning as many of these combinations as possible, but when fighting, it is important not to treat them as though they are written in stone. If you throw the first punch in your combination and your opponent reacts differently than expected, it is important to alter your combination based upon the openings available. I wish acquiring this skill came easy, but knowing when and how to change your combinations can only come from practice and countless hours sparring.



## JAB TO RIGHT HOOK

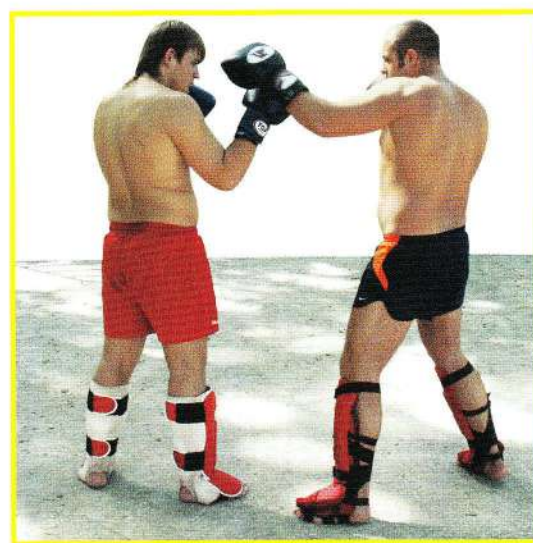
In the sequence below, I'm standing in a traditional fighting stance and my opponent is standing in a southpaw stance. The goal when striking with an opponent in an opposite stance is to position your lead foot to the outside of his lead foot. This exposes one whole side of his body, gives you a dominant angle from which to attack, and increases your odds of landing your strikes. Acquiring this angle can be a difficult task, especially when your opponent is trying to assume the same angle. A good way to set it up is to throw a jab into your opponent's face. Momentarily blinding him, you can then step out to the side without telegraphing your intentions and then launch your follow-up techniques. In this particular case, I choose to follow up with a punch that is a cross between a hook and an uppercut. If you look at the photos in which I throw this punch, you'll notice that I keep my thumb angled upward as though I'm throwing an uppercut. But because I've stepped to the outside of my opponent's centerline, it would be difficult to land a straight uppercut, so I throw it along the same trajectory as a hook. By blending aspects from both, you can acquire a dominant angle of attack and throw a very effective punch toward your opponent's centerline at the same time.



Kirill is in a southpaw stance and I'm in a traditional fighting stance. Both of us are looking for an opening to attack.



As I throw a left jab at Kirill's face, I step my left foot to the outside of his right foot. Notice how this exposes the right side of his body.



### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*As you throw the jab, step your lead foot to the outside of your opponent's lead foot.
- \*After throwing the jab, bring your hand back to your face for protection.
- \*When you throw the right hook, keep your thumb pointed toward the ceiling. This allows you to strike to your opponent's center without compromising your strike or positioning.
- \*Whoever achieves a dominant angle first will most likely do better in the exchanges.





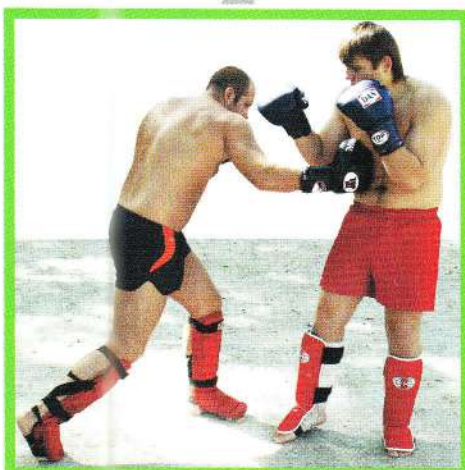
As my jab lands to Kirill's face, I slide my right foot toward my left. Notice how I now have a dominant angle from which to attack.



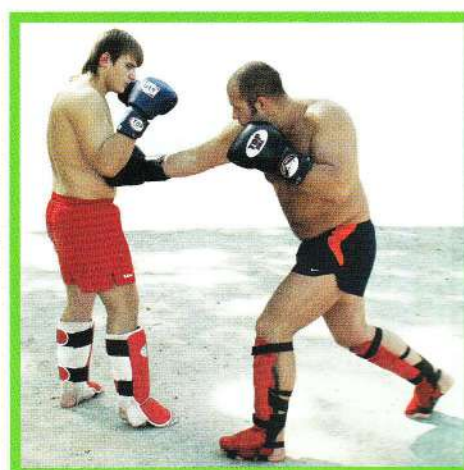
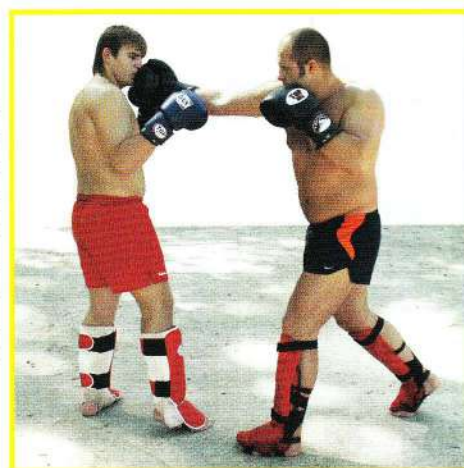
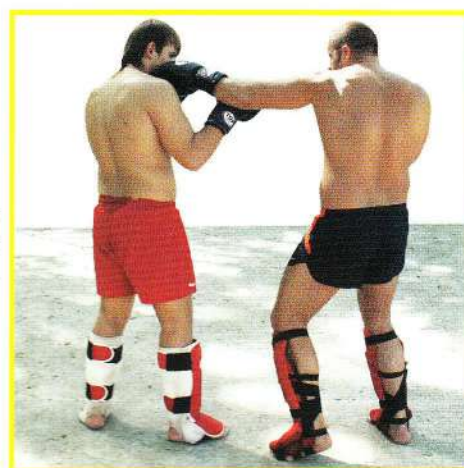
The instant my jab lands, I move on to my next attack by stepping my left foot forward, rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, drawing my left hand back into my stance, and throwing a right hook toward Kirill's chin. Notice how I've moved even deeper to the outside of Kirill's right foot, improving my angle of attack and ruining his.



Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I pivot on the ball of my right foot and land a right hook to Kirill's chin. Notice how in this instance I've kept my right thumb pointing upward. This is a cross between an uppercut and a hook, and it allows me to strike my opponent's center and not compromise my positioning. From here, I can continue with my attack or return to my fighting stance.



In this scenario, I opt to throw the right hook to Kirill's body instead of to his head. Constantly switching up your attacks will prevent you from developing patterns that your opponent can pick up on.





## CROSS TO HOOK

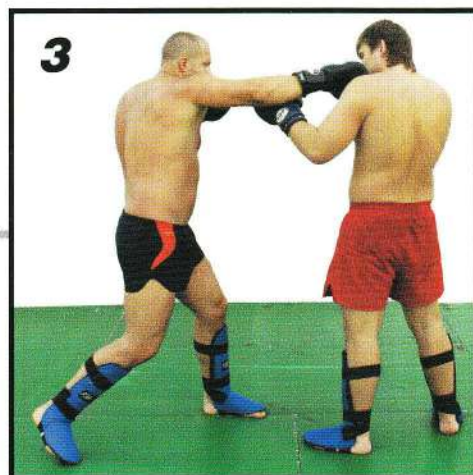
A large percentage of competitors will initiate the majority of their attacks using the traditional jab/cross combination. Although it is quite possible to catch your opponent with one or both of the punches, he will most likely expect the combination and defend against it instinctively. To switch things up, it is important to initiate your attacks using a number of different combos. Personally, I like to lead with a cross because few expect it, and then follow up with a powerful left hook. The cross has to travel a greater distance than the jab to reach its target, which means your opponent is more likely to react to it, but a large percentage of the time they react in such a way that makes them vulnerable to the left hook. And because the cross sets your hips up perfectly for the hook, you can come forward with an immense amount of speed and power. If you watch some of my fights, you'll notice that I've been very successful with this combination.



**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** I drive off my right foot, step my left foot forward, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw a right cross toward Kirill's face.



**3** Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I pivot on the ball of my right foot and land a straight right cross to Kirill's jaw.



**4** The instant I land the cross, I draw my right hand back into my stance, pull my right shoulder back, whip my hips in a clockwise direction, and throw a left hook toward Kirill's face.



**5** Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I pivot on my left foot and land a left hook to Kirill's jaw. Notice how the momentum of the hook has carried my body forward.

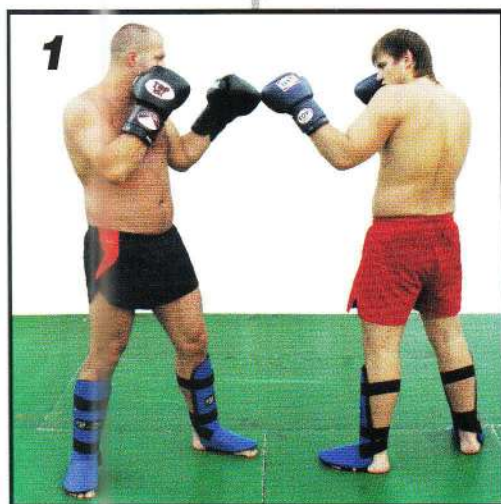
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Use the cross to set up the hook.
- \*Flow directly into the hook as your cross strikes its target. The combination should be executed in one fluid motion.
- \*Once you land the hook, use the openings created to continue with your attack.

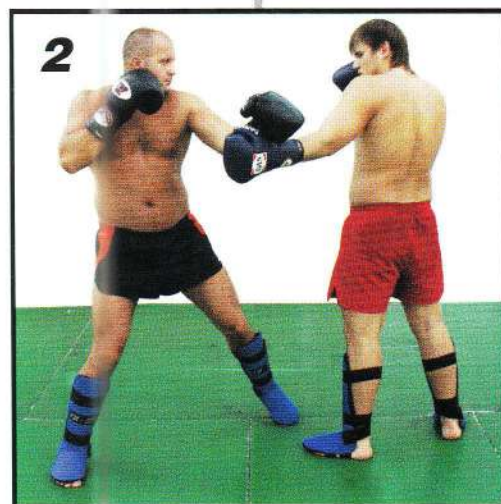


## LEAD INSIDE HAND TRAP TO RIGHT CROSS

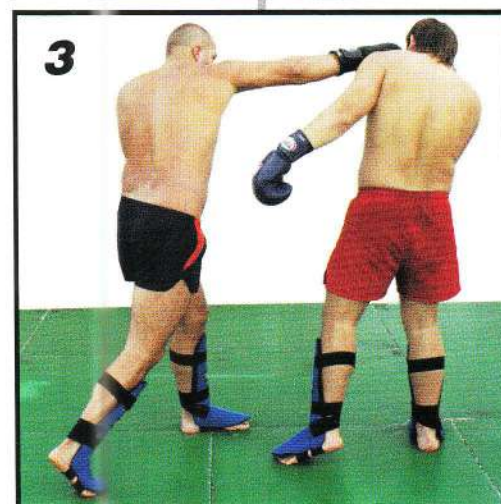
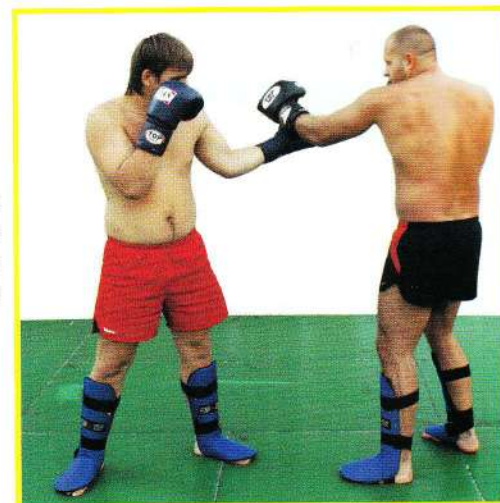
When you're close enough to punch your opponent, the chances are he will keep his arms up to protect his head, making it difficult for you to land a clean punch to his face. A great way to increase your odds is to utilize a hand trap. If you look at the photos below, you'll notice that I use my lead hand to slap my opponent's lead hand away from his body, and then I exploit the opening I created by throwing a right cross at his exposed face. In order to be effective with this technique, it is imperative that you throw your strike before your opponent can reestablish his stance, which means your hand trap and your strike should be executed in one fluid movement. Mastering this simple yet effective form of attack allows you to create openings, land your punches a higher percentage of the time, and routinely throw your opponent off his game. I highly suggest spending the time it takes to get the hang of it.



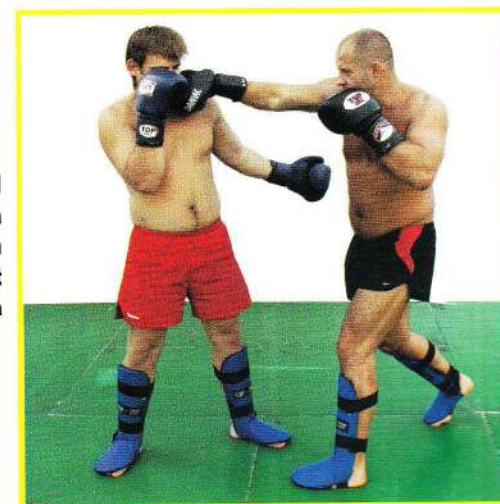
**1**  
I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2**  
To break Kirill's guard and create an opening for a right cross, I slap his left arm away from his body using my left arm. Notice how I slap the inside of his arm instead of the top.



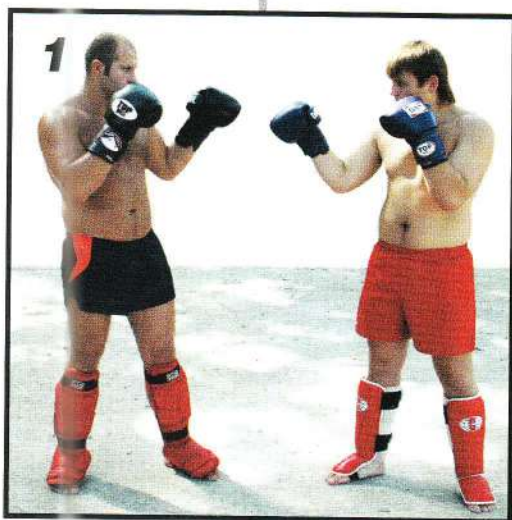
**3**  
As Kirill's guard is forced open, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, pivot on the ball of my right foot, draw my left arm back into my stance, and throw a right cross at his exposed face.





## LEAD OUTSIDE HAND TRAP TO STRAIGHT CROSS

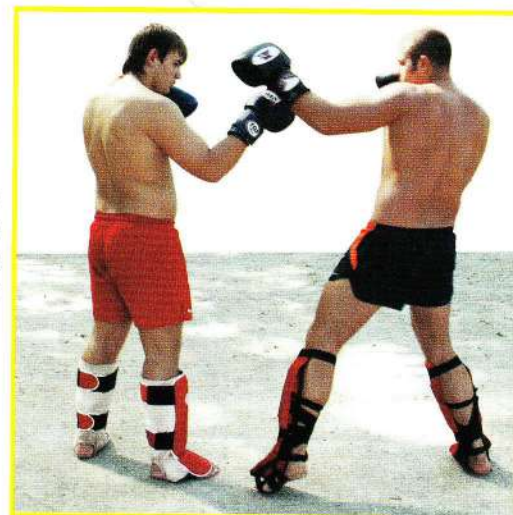
In the previous sequence, I demonstrated how to use a hand trap to break your opponent's guard and create an opening to land a right cross. In this sequence I show how to utilize the exact same technique against an opponent who is standing in an opposite stance. Due to the positioning of your opponent's body in relation to yours, there are a couple of major changes. Instead of slapping his lead arm to the outside of his body, slap it toward the inside. Secondly, when you throw the right cross, step your lead leg toward the outside of his lead leg to acquire a dominant angle of attack. Mastering both variations of this technique will help prevent your opponent from being able to trick you up in the ring by switching his stance.



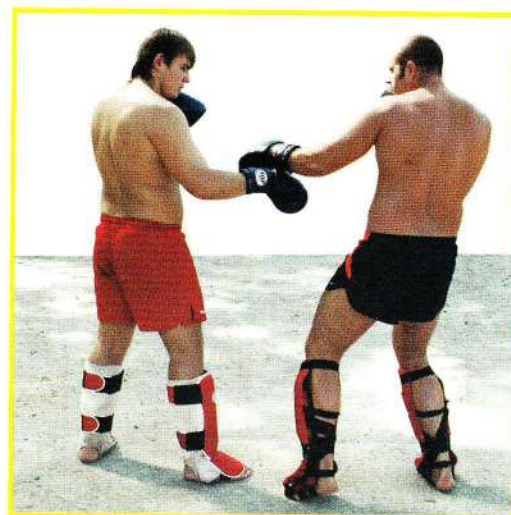
Kirill is standing in a southpaw stance and I'm standing in a traditional fighting stance. Both of us are searching for an opening to attack.



To break Kirill's guard and setup the cross, I step my left foot to the outside of his right foot and place my left hand against the outside of his right hand.



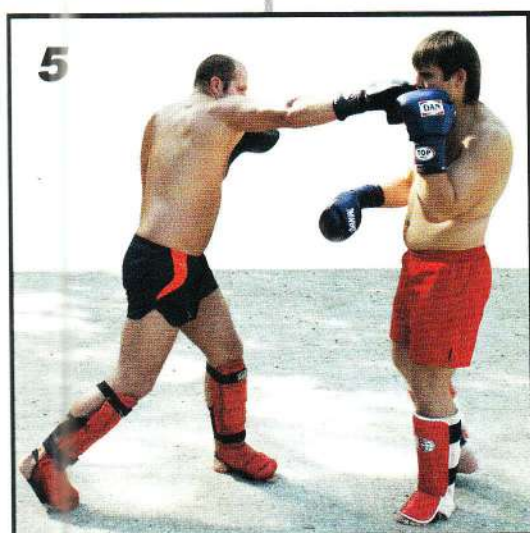
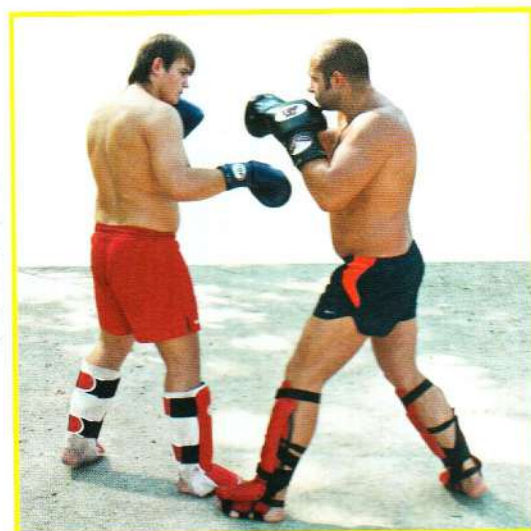
I slap Kirill's right hand down and to the inside of his body using my left arm.



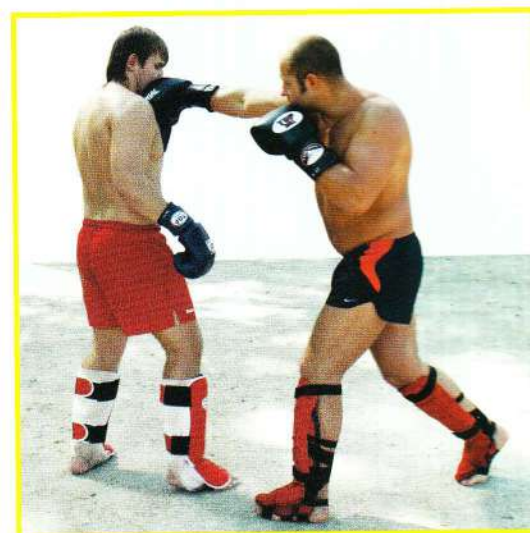




Having opened Kirill's guard, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, pivot on the ball of my right foot, draw my left hand back into my stance, and throw a right cross toward his face.



Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and pivot on the ball of my right foot, I land a straight right cross to Kirill's face. From here, I will capitalize on his stunned state by following up with another attack.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Both the hand trap and the punch should be executed in one fluid motion.
- \*Avoid overextending your arm as you slap open your opponent's guard.
- \*When executing the hand trap against an opponent in an opposite stance, slap the outside of his hand and force his arm toward the inside of his body.
- \*Step your lead foot to the outside of your opponent's lead foot when you follow up with the cross.
- \*Once you land the cross, capitalize on your opponent's stunned state by following up with another attack.



## FAR HAND TRAP TO CROSS TO LEFT HOOK

This hand-trapping technique is different than the previous two. Instead of opening your opponent's guard with your lead hand and throwing the cross with your rear hand, you open your opponent's guard with your rear hand and then throw the cross with your rear hand. The goal is to slap your opponent's hand down just far enough to land a clean punch, making the technique more of a quick slap than a clean trap. In order to be effective with it, you need to utilize speed. Your punch won't pack as much power as normal, but landing the cross will create openings to follow up with other punches, such as the left hook.



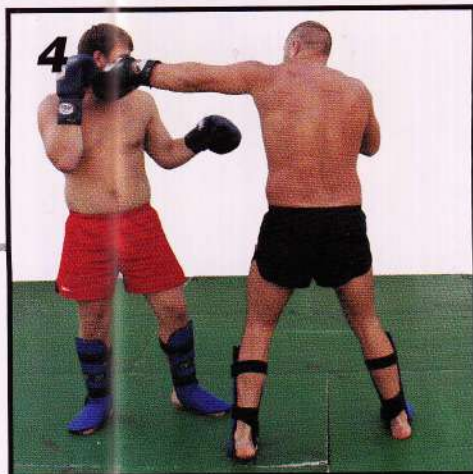
I'm squared off with Kirill. Both of us are in traditional fighting stances.



I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and bat Kirill's left hand down using my right hand. It is important to notice that this movement is very subtle. In order to land the cross, you only need to slightly lower your opponent's lead hand.



Having slapped Kirill's left hand down, I immediately pivot on my right foot, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and follow through with a right cross.



To use Kirill's stunned state to my advantage, I quickly draw my right hand back into my stance, pull my right shoulder back, whip my hips in a clockwise direction, and throw a left hook at his face.



### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Use your rear hand to force your opponent's lead hand out of position, and then follow through with the cross.
- \*When you utilize the hand trap, avoid dropping your hand too low.
- \*Execute the hand trap and cross in one fluid movement.
- \*The instant you land the cross, capitalize on your opponent's stunned state by following up with the left hook.



## RIGHT HOOK TO OUTSIDE LOW KICK

In this sequence I throw a left hook at my opponent's face, which forces him to think about protecting his head, and then I follow up with a low right kick to his lead leg. In addition to distracting your opponent, leading with the hook winds your hips up for the kick. It may seem like a simple technique, but you must be extremely fluid in your movements. To acquire the mechanics needed to flow from the first strike to the second, I suggest practicing this combo as much as possible on the heavy bag, when hitting the focus mitts, and while sparring. Every repetition done in the gym will increase your chances of effectively using this combination in a fight.



**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** To wind up my body for the left hook, I drive off my right leg, step my left foot forward, and slightly rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction.



**3** Whipping my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I throw a left hook at Kirill's face. Notice how by throwing the hook I have wound my body up for the right low kick.



**4** The instant I land the hook, I pull my right shoulder back, push off the ball of my right foot, and thrust my right hip forward. Notice how I bring my right hand up to shield my face and turn my left foot so that it is pointed at a forty-five-degree angle to my left.



**5** Continuing to pull my left shoulder back and thrust my right hip forward, my leg whips straight into Kirill's left leg. Notice how I dig the inside portion of my shinbone into the sciatic nerve running down the outside of his thigh.



**6** I pull my right leg back and reestablish my fighting stance.

### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Use the left hook to distract your opponent, and then come forward with a right low kick.
- \* Don't get lazy with your hook. Throw both of your strikes with commitment.
- \* Avoid hesitating between strikes. Both the hook and the kick should flow seamlessly together.



## JAB TO CROSS TO OUTSIDE LOW KICK

When you constantly switch up the combinations you throw, your opponent will begin to expect the unexpected, which in turn will make him vulnerable to getting caught with the more traditional combinations such as the jab/cross. In the sequence below I use the jab/cross combo to close the distance between my opponent and me, pull his focus away from protecting the lower half of his body, and force him to backpedal. Both strikes are capable of causing damage, but instead of retreating after landing the cross, I use the positioning of my body to land a right low kick to my opponent's lead leg. Although this might look like an easy combination to acquire, it can be very difficult learning the proper mechanics. Throwing a right handed punch and then following up with a right-legged kick throws many practitioners off when they first start out. They either focus so much on the cross that their kick suffers or they focus on the kick prematurely and their cross suffers. The goal is to throw two powerful strikes consecutively from the same side of your body, and this takes a lot of practice coordinating your movements. To accomplish this, practice throwing a normal straight cross, but instead of pulling your hand back toward your body after impact, keep your arm extended. This will not only momentarily blind your opponent to the kick, but it will also allow you to maintain distance and keep your balance. While you still have the circular momentum of the punch stored up in your hips, push off your back foot and thrust your right hip forward. When performed correctly, the cross and the kick will land powerfully on their target just a split second apart.



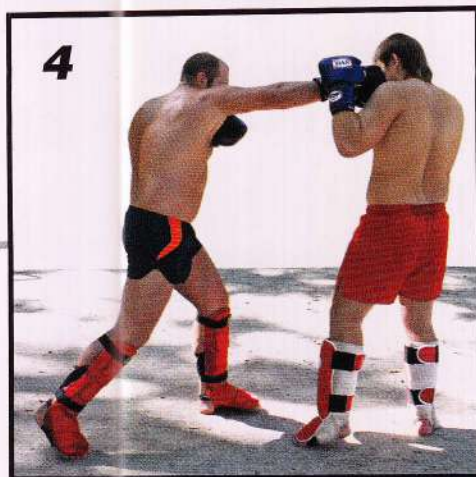
1 I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



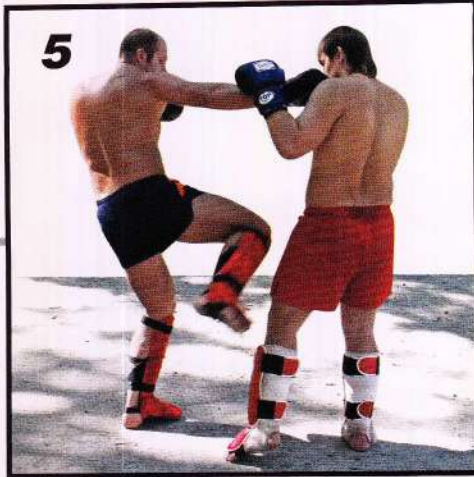
2 I drive off my right foot, step my left foot forward, and throw a left jab at Kirill's face.



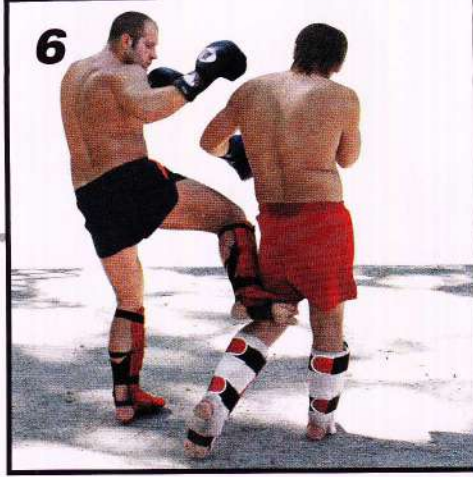
3 The instant my jab lands, I pull my left hand back into my stance, rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, come up onto the ball of my right foot, and throw a right cross toward Kirill's face.



4 Continuing to rotate my hips in a counterclockwise direction, I pivot on my right foot and land a right cross to Kirill's face.



5 Using the momentum generated from the right cross, I thrust my right hip forward and throw a right low kick toward Kirill's left thigh. Notice how I have left my right arm extended as I come forward with the kick. This not only helps me maintain distance between my opponent and me, but it also blocks his view of the low kick and increases my chances of landing the strike clean.



6 I land a powerful right low kick to Kirill's leg.



## CUT KICK TO SWITCH STEP TO HEAD KICK

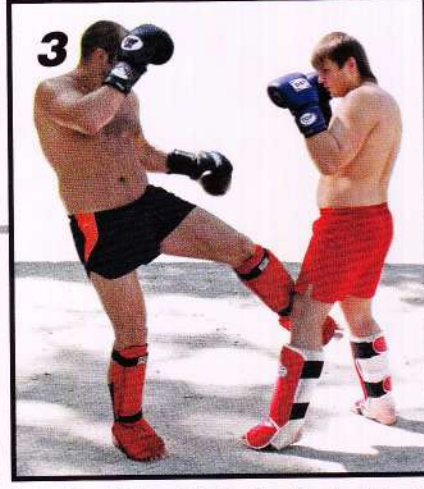
I begin this sequence by throwing a cut kick at the inner thigh of my opponent's lead leg. There are a couple of different ways this kick can be executed. Snapping your lead leg straight from your stance into your opponent's lead thigh is by far the quickest method, but it doesn't cause very much damage by itself. You need to land five or ten of them throughout the course of the fight to get the desired effects. The second way to throw the lead cut kick is to execute a switch step and then kick, which is the method I demonstrate below. This setup contains a lot more power and can cause a fair amount of damage when your opponent fails to check it. However, in the sequence below my intentions are greater than landing the cut kick and causing damage. I lead with this strike because it's an excellent way to knock your opponent off balance. Shocked by the sudden repositioning of his lead leg, the majority of the time your opponent will drop his hands as if he were falling forward. This leaves his head vulnerable to attack. In this particular sequence, I capitalize on that opening by throwing a left high kick. Learning how to throw two consecutive kicks with the same leg will greatly improve your fighting skills, but if for some reason this combination doesn't fit your style, exchange the high kick for some other strike. The important part is using the cut kick to set up your secondary attack.



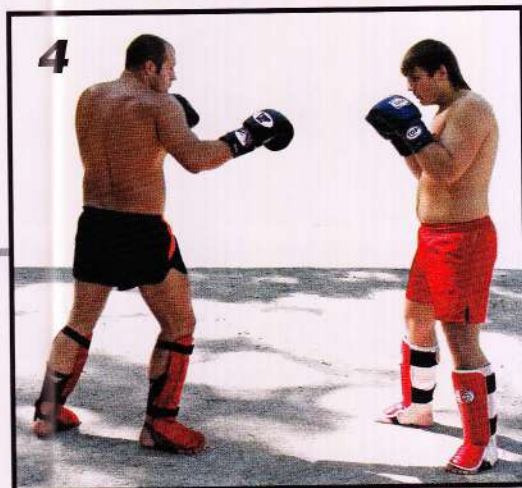
**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** I decide to execute a cut kick to Kirill's lead leg. To generate power, I reverse the positioning of my feet by executing a switch step. When I land in a southpaw stance, I'm balanced on the ball of my left foot, my right foot is pointing toward my right side at a forty-five-degree angle, my left arm is up to shield my face, and my right arm is down at my side.



**3** I land a left cut kick to the inside of Kirill's left leg.



**4** My cut kick knocks Kirill's left leg to his left and disrupts his balance. To set up my next attack, I pull my left leg back and reestablish a southpaw stance.



**5** The instant I land in a southpaw stance, I push off the ball of my left foot, throw my left arm behind my body to generate power and maintain my balance, bring my right hand up to my face for protection, thrust my left hip forward, and throw a high kick to the right side of Kirill's head.

### KEY CONCEPTS

\*There are two types of cut kicks that you can utilize. The first is to throw the kick directly from your stance, which is the quickest, and the second is to execute a switch step first, which will allow you to generate more power behind the strike.

\*Don't hesitate between kicks. The instant you disrupt your opponent's base and balance with the cut kick, push off the canvas with your back foot and fire the second kick. If you delay, your opponent will be able to regain his balance and execute a proper block.



## CUT KICK TO SWITCH STEP TO PUSH KICK

I begin this sequence by throwing a left lead cut kick, just as I did in the previous technique. But instead of following up with a left high kick, I execute a push kick. If you look at the photos below, you'll notice that my lead cut kick spreads my opponent's legs apart and puts him in a square stance. With his feet no longer staggered, he has no way to brace himself from getting pushed backward, allowing me to either knock him off balance or put him on his butt by throwing the push kick. It's not as damaging a blow as a kick to the head, but it tends to be a whole lot safer to execute. Deciding which kick to utilize should be based upon how your opponent reacts to the cut kick. If he falls forward after the cut kick, throwing a high kick to his head is usually a good bet. If he lands in a square stance, the push kick is a great way to knock him on his ass. If you've already used both techniques and your opponent is beginning to figure out the pattern, switch things up after landing the cut kick by stepping forward and throwing a combination with your hands such as a right cross to left hook.



**1** I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



**2** To generate power for a lead cut kick, I reverse the positioning of my feet by executing a switch step.

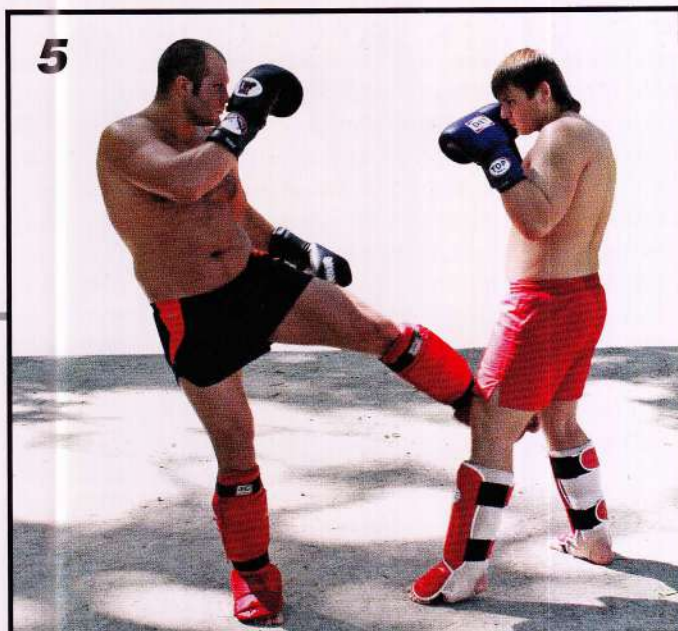


**3** I assume a southpaw stance. Notice how I'm balanced on the ball of my left foot and the toes of my right foot are pointing toward my right side at a forty-five-degree angle.



**4** Pulling my right shoulder back and thrusting my left hip forward, I throw a left cut kick toward the inside of Kirill's left leg.





I land a hard left cut kick to the inside of Kirill's left thigh.



My cut kick knocks Kirill off balance and forces him to assume a square stance. To capitalize on his compromised position, I pull my left leg back and reestablish a southpaw stance.



The instant I assume a southpaw stance, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, lift my left leg off the ground, and draw my knee toward my chest. Notice how I keep my left leg coiled inward. This spring-loads my leg, which will add a considerable amount of pushing power to the kick.



I thrust my left hip forward, throw my left arm behind my body, extend my left leg straight out, and drive the ball of my foot into Kirill's solar plexus. Notice how I have not leaned into the kick. If you lean forward and miss your kick, you'll fall forward and be vulnerable to your opponent's strikes.

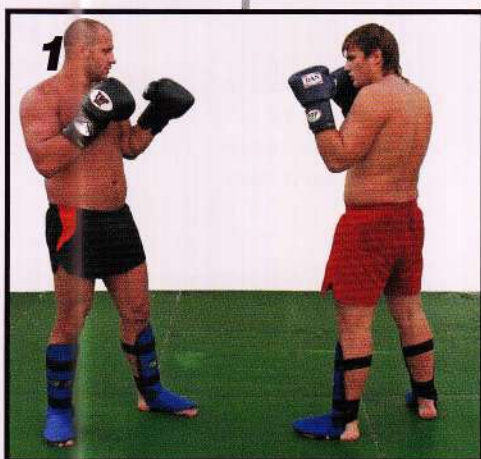
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* The lead cut kick can be thrown directly from your stance or after executing a switch step.
- \* After knocking your opponent off balance with the cut kick, bring your lead leg back into a southpaw stance and throw a left push kick.
- \* Don't hesitate between kicks.



## SUPERMAN PUNCH

The superman punch is one of the most devastating strikes in MMA. It's another classic example of utilizing the low-high concept, but it's a little different than some of the previous combinations that I've demonstrated. Instead of leading with a low kick to get your opponent to drop his hands, you throw a fake low kick with no intentions of actually landing the strike. It serves the same purpose—to get your opponent to drop his guard—but it cuts down on lag time between your first and second attack. In order to effectively use this attack, you must first understand the mechanics. The goal is to bring your back leg far enough forward to convince your opponent you're throwing a kick, and then quickly thrust that same leg backward to propel your punch forward. When done correctly, your combined actions will make it look as though you're attempting to fly through the air like superman, hence the name. Once you've spent some time mastering the movements involved, which can be a little tricky at first, it is important to learn how to set up the punch. If you're like most, you'll probably find that it's most effective after you've landed a couple of damaging low kicks to your opponent's legs. Not wanting to be on the receiving end of yet another painful blow, he'll most likely begin dropping his guard every time you throw a kick to his legs. Instead of giving him what he expects, pull your leg back halfway through the kick and use the energy to land a devastating cross to his unprotected face.



I'm in my fighting stance, searching for an opening to attack.



Spotting an opening, I pull my left shoulder back, push off the ball of my right foot, rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, thrust my right hip forward, and throw a right low kick toward Kirill's left leg.



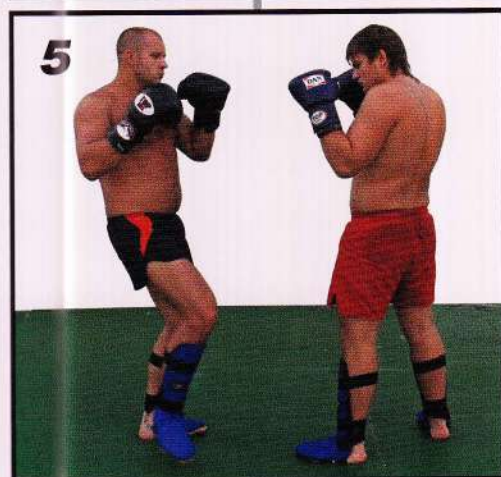
I land a right low kick to the outside of Kirill's left thigh.



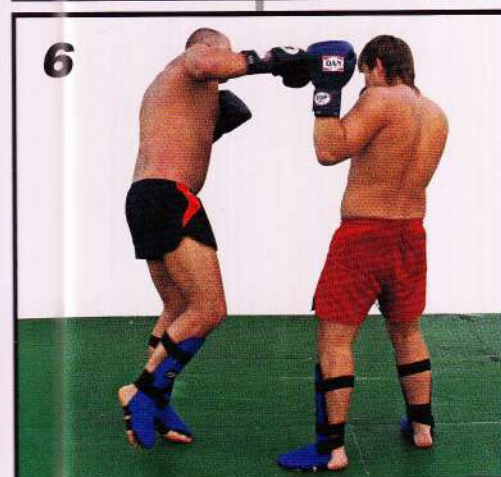




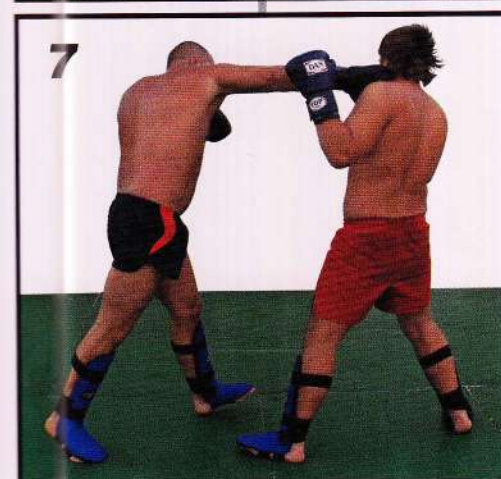
After landing the low kick, I pull my right leg back and reestablish my fighting stance.



Having landed a hard right low kick to Kirill's thigh, I decide to fake a low kick to set up a superman punch. To accomplish this, I bring my right leg forward just as I would when throwing a right low kick, but stop the forward progression of my leg when it reaches the same verticle plane as my lead hand.



In one fluid motion, I thrust my right leg behind me, pull my left shoulder back, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw a straight right cross toward Kirill's face.



Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I plant my right foot on the mat and land a right cross to Kirill's jaw.









# THE CLINCH

In this section I demonstrate close-range striking attacks, the Muay Thai clinch, methods for escaping the Muay Thai clinch, and how to utilize clinching control positions such as head and wrist control, double underhooks, double overhooks, and over-unders to execute throws and takedowns. I also offer several takedown defense techniques. To make the most out of this section it is not only important to study and practice each technique individually, but also to work tirelessly on blending the techniques together. For example, you may utilize a close-range striking combination, wrap your opponent up in the Muay Thai clinch, throw a knee to his midsection, and then transition into a double-leg takedown. Although certain moves will feel more natural due to your background, body type, and fighting style, acquiring the ability to flow from one technique to the next is a mandatory ingredient for becoming a well-rounded mixed martial arts fighter.

## CLOSE-RANGE STRIKES

Unleashing a close-range combination not only allows you to inflict damage when standing face-to-face with your opponent, but it can also create openings to tie him up in the clinch or execute a takedown. There are an infinite number of combinations you can build. I suggest experimenting with the ones I've included, and then altering them to better fit your strengths and attributes.



## MUAY THAI CLINCH

The Muay Thai clinch is where you gain control of your opponent's body by wrapping both of your hands around the back of his head. Because your hands are tied up, the position is best suited for pushing and pulling your opponent off balance and then firing knees to his midsection and head. In addition to demonstrating how to set up these attacks, I also include several escapes for when your opponent catches you in the Muay Thai clinch.



## THROWS, TAKEDOWNS & TAKEDOWN DEFENSE

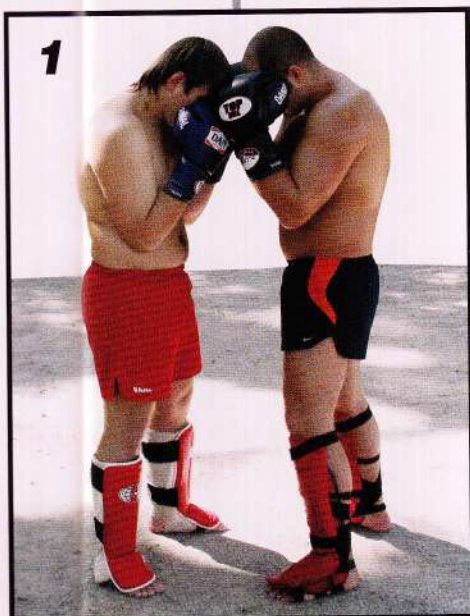
In this part of the book I demonstrate how to execute numerous throws and takedowns from the various clinching control positions, such as head and wrist control, the over-under position, and body locks. When studying these techniques, pay special attention to the positioning of your head, because it will determine which throws are available to you. If your head is on the same side of your opponent's body as your underhook or overhook, you have dominant control. If your head is on the opposite side of your opponent's body as your underhook or overhook, you have neutral control. As you will see, there are offensive options you can utilize from both controls. It is also important to focus on footwork and explosive hip movement. If you overlook this aspect, your throws will suffer. At the end of this section, I offer a couple of ways to defend against a takedown.



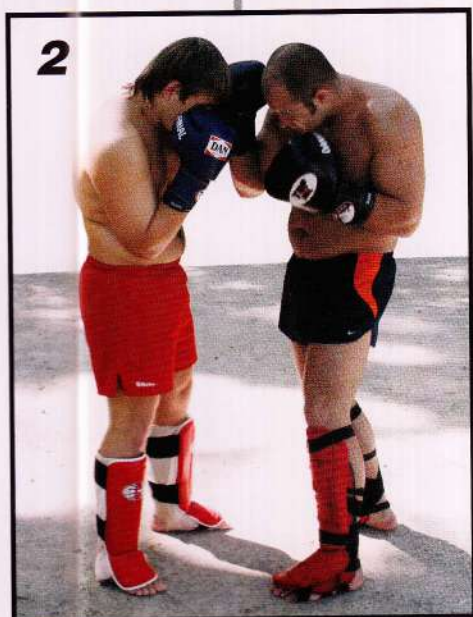
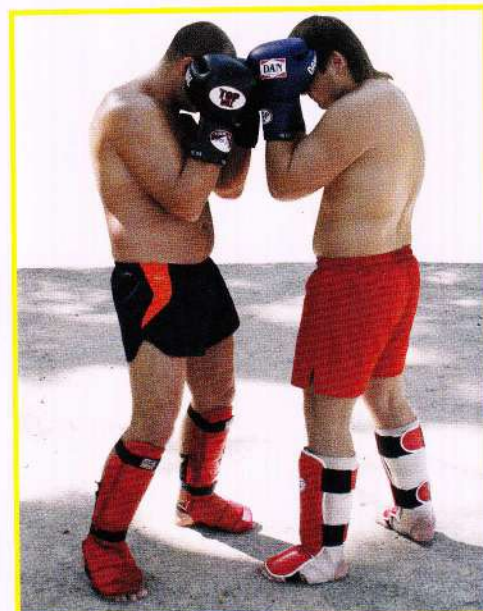


## LEAD DOUBLE UPPERCUT

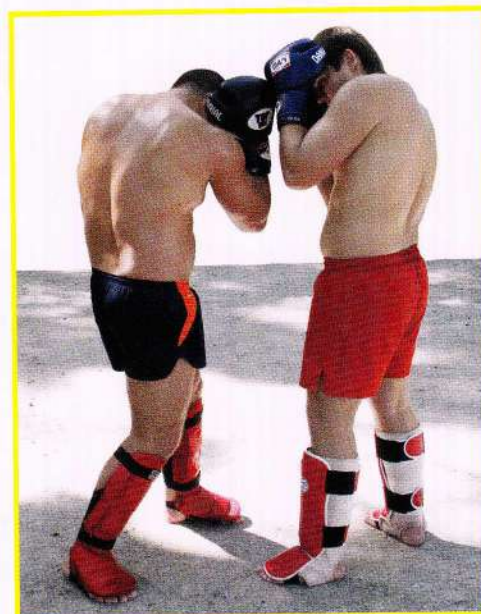
In this sequence I demonstrate how to utilize an uppercut when fighting in a close-range scenario. Although the uppercut to the body and the uppercut to the head are both extremely effective when thrown individually, I particularly like throwing them back-to-back with my lead hand. Most of the time I'll lead with a left uppercut to the body because it tends to cause my opponent to dip to his right side, creating a pathway for me to land an uppercut to his head. It's possible to throw a rear-handed uppercut for your second strike, but that is what most opponents expect. By throwing a left uppercut at his head instead, I increase my chances of landing with my second shot. I won't deny that it's more difficult to throw two punches in a row with the same arm, but once you get familiar with the movements, you'll probably find that you land both strikes a larger percentage of the time.



Kirill and I are fighting in close range, making it important that I keep both hands up to protect my head.



I spring-load my hips and shoulders by corkscrewing my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side.



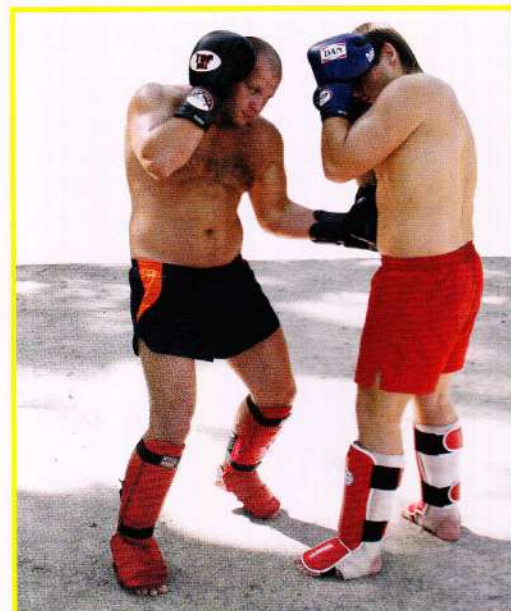
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Keep your hands up at all times to protect your head from counterpunches.
- \*When throwing the left body uppercut, rotate your body in a counterclockwise direction as you would when delivering a right cross. This will set your hips up to deliver a much more powerful punch to your opponent's midsection.
- \*Don't hesitate between punches.

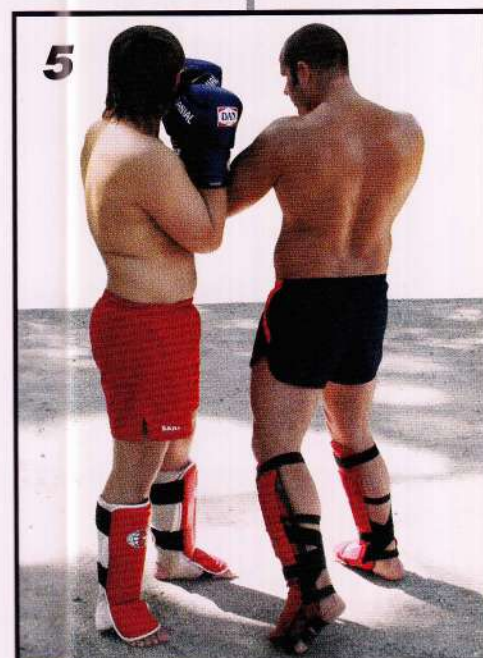
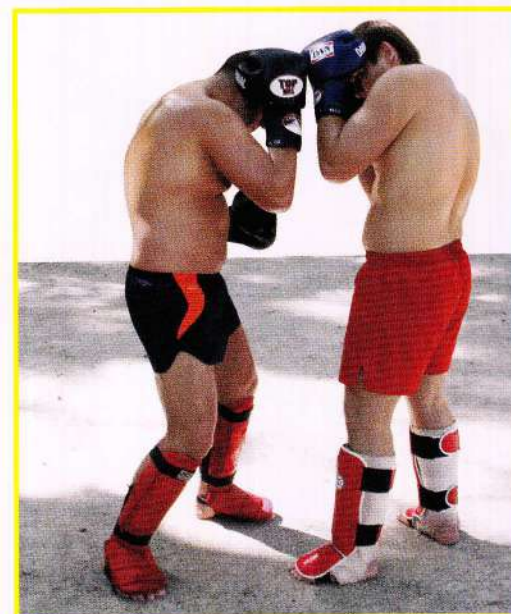




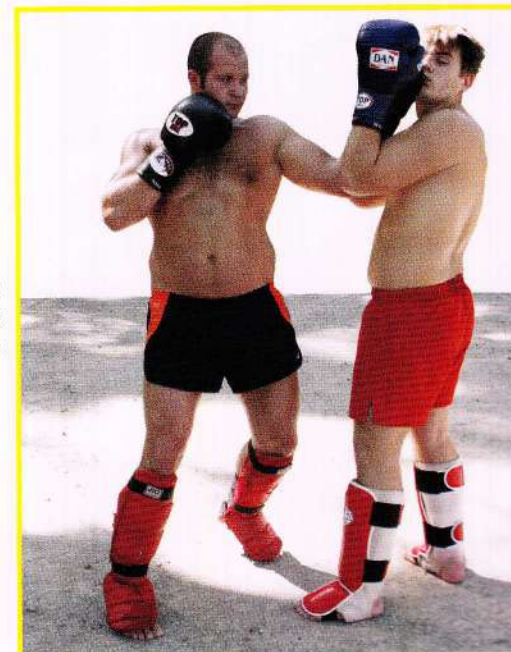
I whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left uppercut to Kirill's abdomen.



Landing the left uppercut to Kirill's body causes him to dip toward his right side. To capitalize on this opening, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and prepare to throw a left uppercut to his face.



I whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left uppercut to Kirill's chin.





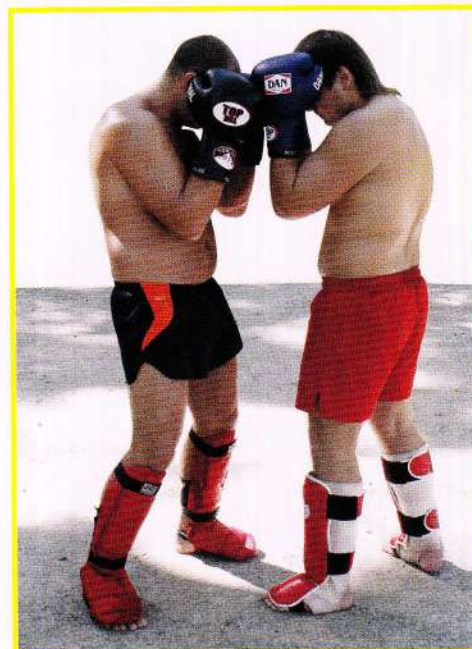
## BODY UPPERCUT TO LEFT HOOK

I begin this technique just as I did the last—with a left uppercut to the body. When thrown with power, the impact of the punch will often cause your opponent to fold toward his right side and drop his arms to protect his midsection. Generally this will create an opening to throw a left uppercut to his chin, which I demonstrated in the previous technique, or a left hook to the right side of his head, which I demonstrate below. Again, throwing two punches in a row with the same arm might be difficult to get the hang of, but it's definitely worth the investment of time.

1



Kirill and I are fighting in close range, making it important that I keep both hands up to protect my head.



2



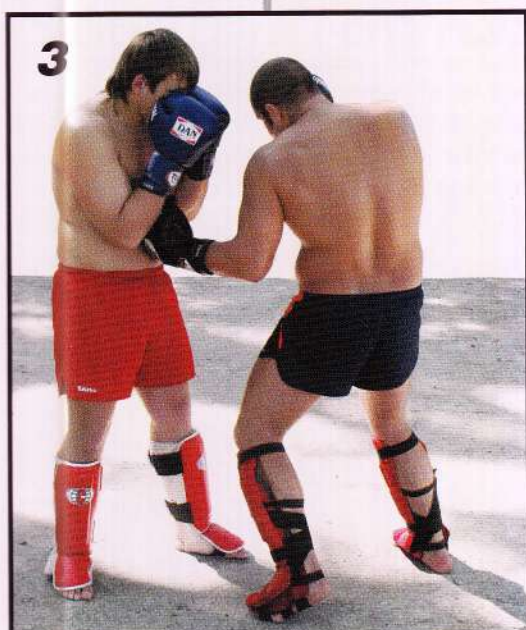
I spring-load my hips and shoulders by corkscrewing my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side.



### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Keep your hands up at all times to protect your head from counterpunches.
- \*When throwing the left body uppercut, rotate your body in a counterclockwise direction as you would when delivering a right cross. This will set your hips up to deliver a much more powerful punch to your opponent's midsection.
- \*Don't hesitate between punches. Flow from one strike to the next in order to capitalize on the openings you create.

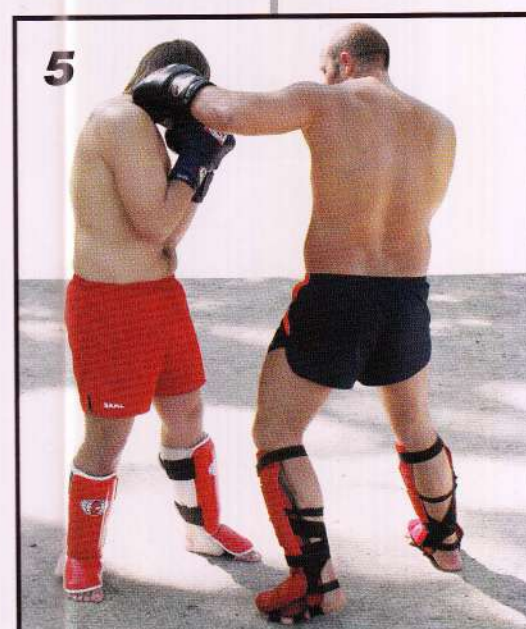
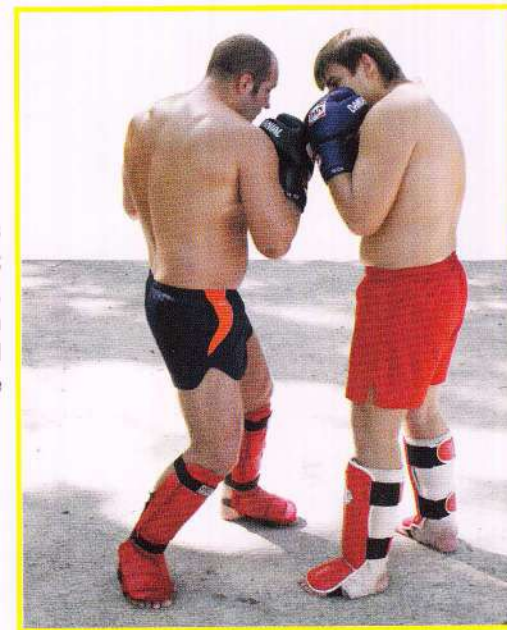




I whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left uppercut to Kirill's abdomen.



Landing the left uppercut to Kirill's body causes him to dip toward his right side. To capitalize on this opening, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and prepare to throw a left hook at the right side of his head.



I whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left hook at the right side of Kirill's face. From here I can continue throwing strikes, execute a takedown, or tie him up in the clinch.





## BODY UPPERCUT TO RIGHT UPPERCUT TO LEFT HOOK

In this sequence I demonstrate how to utilize both of your hands in a close-range combination. Although altering punches from one arm to the other is more predictable, it can be a valuable tool as long as you use each strike to help set up the next. In the sequence below I begin my combination with a left uppercut to my opponent's body just as I did in the previous two, but instead of re-chambering my hips and throwing a second strike using my left arm, I use the circular momentum of my hips to flow right into a right-handed punch. In this particular case, I've chosen a right uppercut to the head to capitalize on the opening created by my first strike. The punch connects with my opponent's chin and lifts his head, exposing both sides of his face to attack. Next, I use the circular momentum of my hips to flow directly into a left hook to the head. By switching back and forth from throwing combinations exclusively with one arm and throwing combinations that employ both arms, you constantly keep your opponent guessing. When you combine this with the low/high principal, you become a very unpredictable striker.



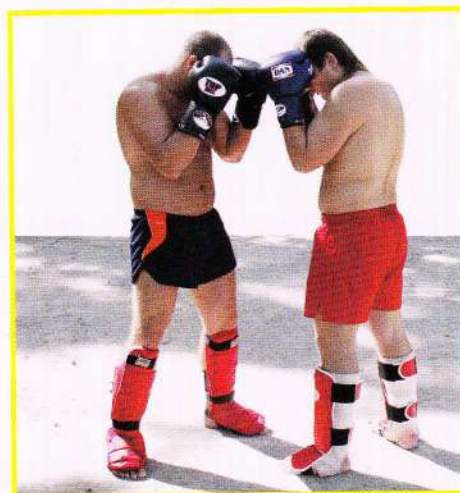
**1** Kirill and I are fighting in close range. I keep both of my hands up to protect my head.



**2** I spring-load my hips and shoulders by corkscrewing my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side.



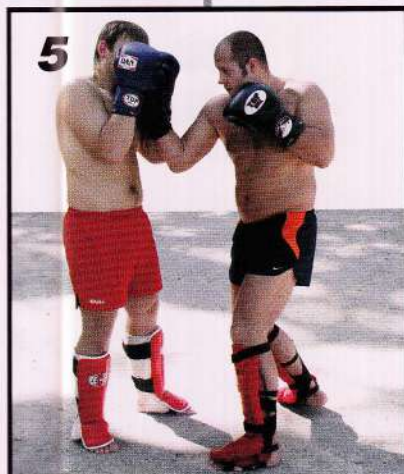
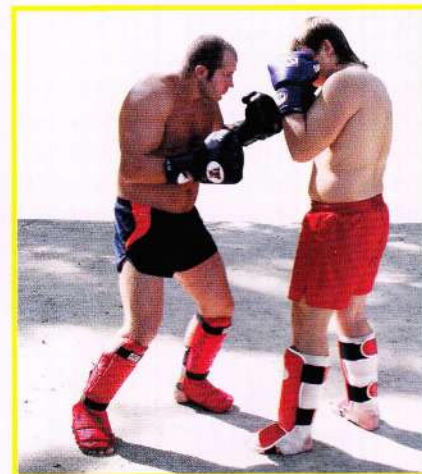
**3** I whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left uppercut to Kirill's abdomen.



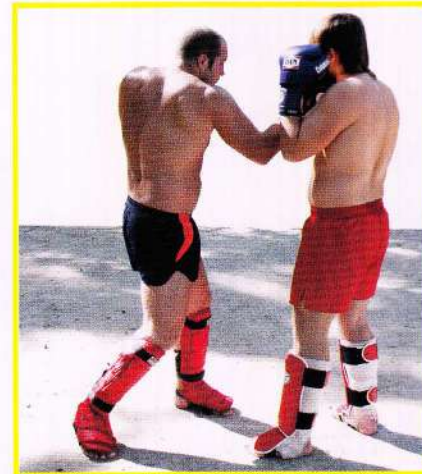




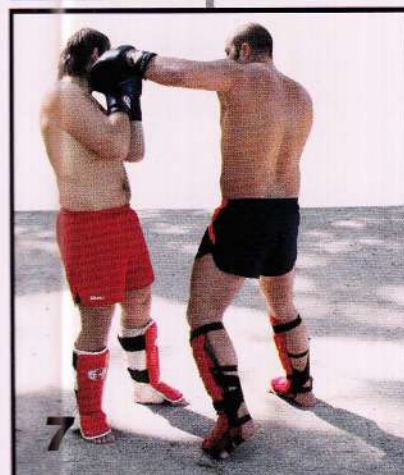
The instant I land the left uppercut, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, pivot on my right foot, pull my left hand back into my stance, and drop my right arm for the uppercut.



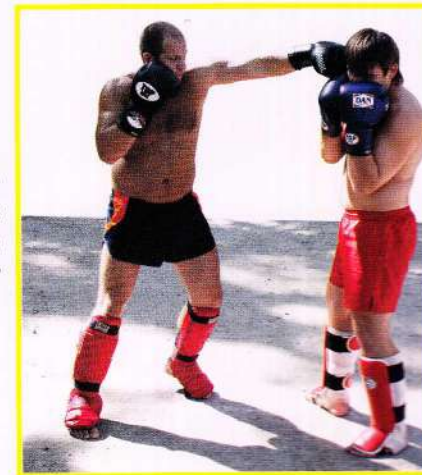
Still rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I throw a powerful right uppercut to Kirill's chin. Notice how this straightens his posture and elevates his head, creating an opening for me to throw a left hook.



Once I land the right uppercut, I immediately rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left hook toward the right side of Kirill's face.



Continuing rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and pivoting on my left foot, I land a left hook to the right side of Kirill's face. From here I can continue attacking with strikes, execute a takedown, or tie him up in the clinch.





## BODY UPPERCUT TO BODY UPPERCUT TO UPPERCUT

As you now know, throwing an uppercut to your opponent's body is an excellent way to set up strikes to his head. However, if you go to the body and your opponent does not dip his guard to protect his midsection, following up with more strikes to the body is usually a good tactic. I did this when I fought Gary Goodridge in the Pride Fighting Championships. I had him backed against the ropes and was pummeling him with strikes. For protection, he covered his face with both of his arms. Instead of trying to break through that shield, I focused on landing uppercuts to his body. Beating on your opponent's guts is an excellent way to remove the wind from his sail. After enough hard shots, even the toughest fighter will attempt to block your body blows, and that's when you go back upstairs. In the sequence below, I have opted to utilize an uppercut to my opponent's chin.



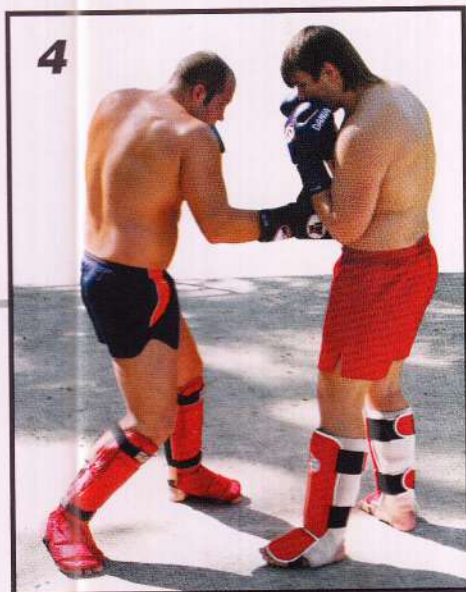
**1** Kirill and I are fighting in close range. I keep both of my hands up to protect my head.



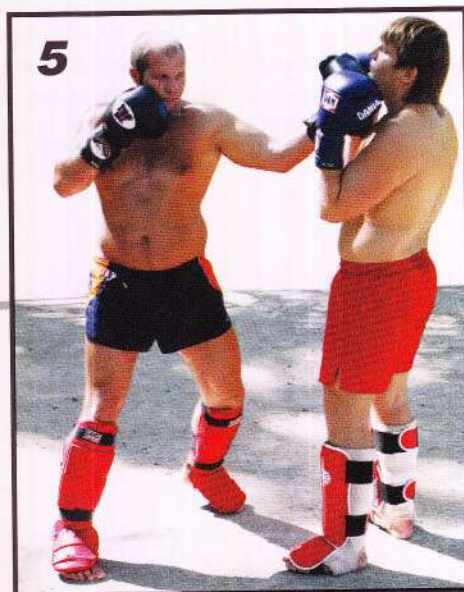
**2** I spring-load my hips and shoulders by corkscrewing my body in a counterclockwise direction and dipping my head toward my left side.



**3** I whip my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left uppercut to Kirill's abdomen.



**4** Kirill keeps his guard up to protect his head. Instead of targeting his face with a follow-up punch, I rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, pivot on my right foot, and throw a right uppercut at his abdomen. Having taken serious damage to his midsection, Kirill dips forward and drops his arms to protect his body.



**5** With Kirill's head now vulnerable to attack, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, pivot on my left foot, and throw a left uppercut at his chin. Notice how the strike lifts his head and straightens his posture, creating an opening for me to execute a takedown or land another strike such as a right cross.

### KEY CONCEPTS

\*If your opponent uses both of his arms to protect his head, strike his body until he drops his guard and then attack with either an uppercut to the jaw or a hook to the side of his face.

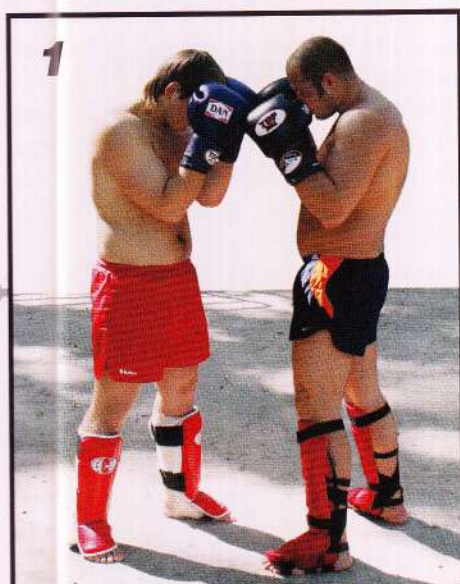
\*When throwing multiple punches to your opponent's body, target the center of his abdomen. As long as he keeps his guard up, it will be the most difficult area for him to protect.

\*Protect your head with the arm you're not striking with.

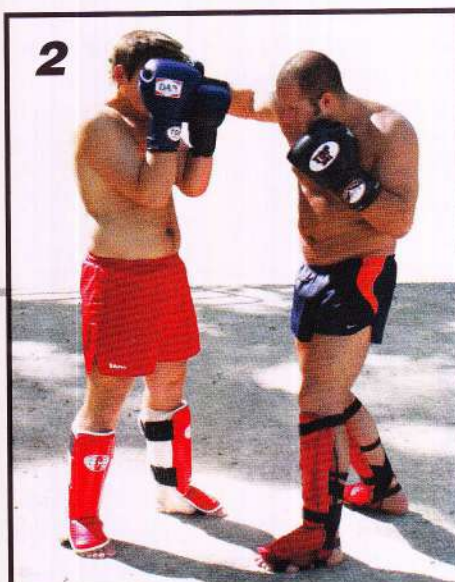


## RIGHT HOOK TO LEFT BODY UPPERCUT

Body punches can be even more devastating than punches that target the head. When you take a hard punch to the face, the chances are you'll see a flash of light, grow dizzy, and struggle to maintain balance on wobbly legs. But generally, recovery from such a blow doesn't take long, and within a short period of time you can again be fighting at 100 percent. A perfect example is my fight with Kuzuyuki Fugita in Pride 26. He hit me with a hard shot to the face that turned my legs to rubber, but within a few seconds I was back to dominating the fight. Taking a hard shot to the body might not produce the same immediate results, but the damage is accumulative. Each body shot you absorb steals a portion of your wind and will to fight. Absorb enough of them, and it can feel like your guts have been scrambled in a blender. For this reason, body shots shouldn't just be viewed as punches that set up strikes to your opponent's head. They should also be viewed as power shots, and power shots generally need to be set up. In the sequence below, I demonstrate how to use a right hook to get your opponent to protect his head by raising his guard, and then how to capitalize on that opening by following up with a left uppercut to his body. It's a rather simple combination, but due to the devastating effects it can have, it is important that you take the time to master it.



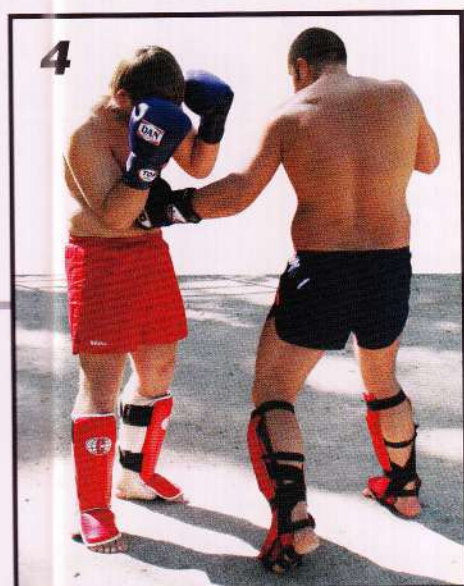
**1** Kirill and I are fighting in close range. I keep both of my hands up to protect my head.



**2** I rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, pivot on my right foot, and throw a right hook toward the left side of Kirill's head.



**3** I land a right hook to the left side of Kirill's face.



**4** Having landed a right hook to Kirill's head, he elevates his arms to protect himself from further abuse. This allows me to pivot on the ball of my left foot and land a clean left uppercut to his abdomen.

### KEY CONCEPTS

\*The best way to make your opponent's body vulnerable to attack is to throw a looping punch at his head. The instant your opponent raises his arms to protect his head, follow up with an uppercut to his unprotected abdomen.



## STRAIGHT KNEES FROM MUAY THAI CLINCH

The Muay Thai clinch (or what some fighters refer to as the double collar tie position) is designed for landing devastating knee strikes to your opponent's body and head. To establish this control position, wrap both of your hands around the back of your opponent's skull, pull his head down, and position your elbows in front of his shoulders to prevent him from shooting in for a takedown. It's a fairly simple technique to get the hang of—the hard part is setting it up. If you attempt to simply walk toward your opponent and grab his head, you'll most likely get punched in the face. However, securing the Muay Thai clinch becomes a whole lot easier after checking one of your opponent's kicks, throwing a combination of punches, or even rising up after failing with a takedown. Once you manage to close the distance between you and your opponent and slap on the Muay Thai clinch, the fun begins. Sometimes the best strategy is to pull his head down and quickly drive in a powerful knee to his midsection. Most of the time this will produce one of two reactions out of your opponent. Either he will attempt to pull his head back up and straighten his posture or he will drive forward for a takedown. If he should attempt to overpower the position by straightening his posture, a good tactic is to simply release his head. As his head slingshots upward, you can drop your elevation and shoot in for a takedown or hurl punches at his unprotected face. If he should attempt to drive forward and scoop up your legs, you can maintain the Muay Thai clinch, keep him at bay with your elbows, and use his forward progression to deliver more knee strikes.

Once you get familiar with establishing the Muay Thai clinch, driving in a knee strike, and using your opponent's reactions to your advantage, it's time to take matters to the next level and learn how to employ footwork and movement. What makes the Muay Thai clinch unique is that you have control of your opponent's head. By utilizing full body movements, you can steer his head in the direction that you like, which in turn causes his body to move in the same direction. Remember, where the head goes the body must follow. For example, by stepping to the outside of your opponent's legs, pivoting your body, and then pulling his head in the direction of your pivot, you force your opponent to step in order to maintain his balance. Just as his foot touches down, you throw a powerful knee strike to either his body or head. Before he can reacquire his posture, you again step to the outside of his legs, pivot your body, and force him to step by pulling his head in the direction of the pivot. As long as you're one step ahead of your opponent, you can go on and on like this. I've included many options for off-balancing your opponent in the sequence below, and deciding which one to utilize should be based upon your opponent's positioning and reactions. For example, if he drives toward your left side, you want to step to the outside of his left leg, pivot on your right foot, allow his energy to carry forward, and then deliver a knee strike the instant he steps to maintain his balance. The best way to familiarize yourself with the various options and when they apply is to engage in clinch sparring as much as possible. Just like the throws I demonstrate in the next section, the Muay Thai clinch is based upon sensitivity. Instead of using power or trying to force your movements, you want to use your opponent's energy against him to thrust him off balance. It's also important to note that this position isn't something that needs to be maintained for a long duration of time. If the Muay Thai clinch doesn't appear to be working to your advantage, move on to something else.



**I secure the Muay Thai clinch on Kirill by wrapping both of my hands around the back of his head and positioning my elbows in front of his shoulders. To put the clinch into effect, I pull his head down into my right shoulder and place my head against the right side of his head. From this position I am safe from both strikes and takedowns, and I can use my control to deliver devastating knees.**



**KEY CONCEPTS**

\*Avoid stalling. Whether you're attempting to off-balance your opponent to deliver multiple knee strikes or simply trying to land a single knee strike, move into your attack the instant you secure the Muay Thai clinch.

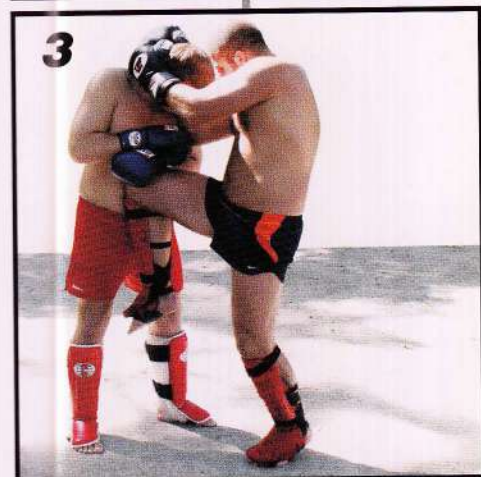
\*Keep your hands wrapped tight around the back of your opponent's head. If you grip your opponent's neck instead of his head, he will be able to maintain his posture and escape the position.

\*Remember—where the head goes the body follows. Use your control to rip your opponent's head down and to the side, employ footwork and hip movement to thrust him off balance, and then use his compromised positioning to deliver knee strikes to his head and midsection.

\*Avoid using force to off-balance your opponent. Instead, use his energy against him by pulling and pushing him in the direction he's already moving.



In order to deliver a hard knee to Kirill's midsection, I must create space between our bodies and pull him off balance. I accomplish this by stepping my right foot backward and pulling his head down using both of my arms.



I pull down on Kirill's head to force his body to come toward me. At the same time, I thrust my right hip forward and drive my right knee into his midsection.



Having landed a powerful knee to Kirill's abdomen, I pull my right leg back and plant my foot on the ground behind me. My next step will be to use his stunned state to off-balance him and deliver more knee strikes.



Before Kirill has a chance to recover, I step my right leg to the outside of his left leg and use both of my arms to begin pulling him toward my left side.



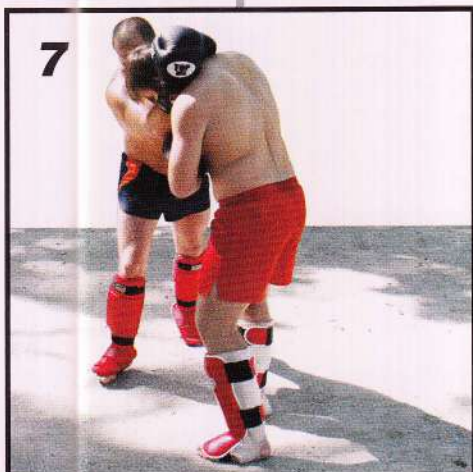


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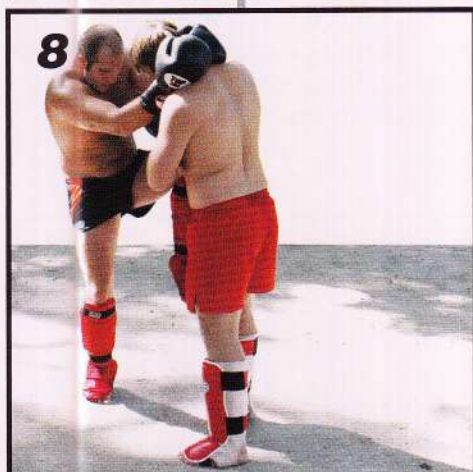
Continuing to pull Kirill toward my left side using my arms, I pivot in a counterclockwise direction on my right foot. Notice how my actions have caused Kirill to take a long step forward with his right leg.

7



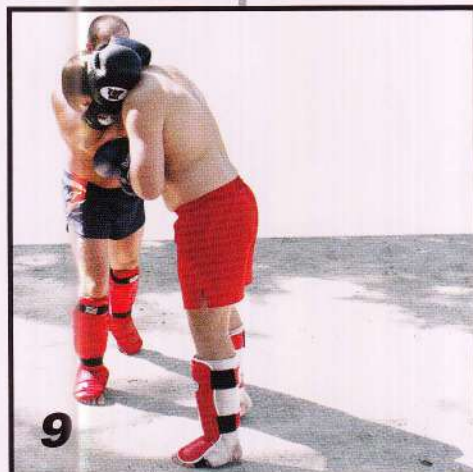
As Kirill attempts to regain his balance, I step my left foot behind me and prepare to drive a straight left knee into his midsection.

8

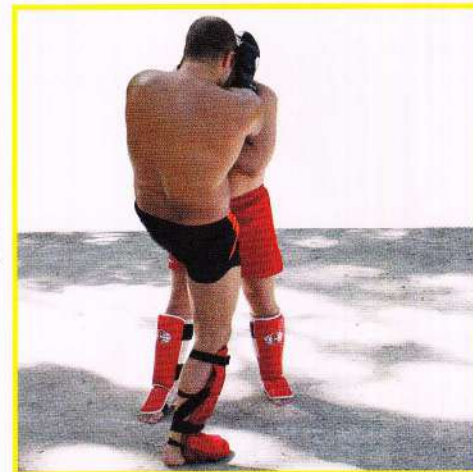
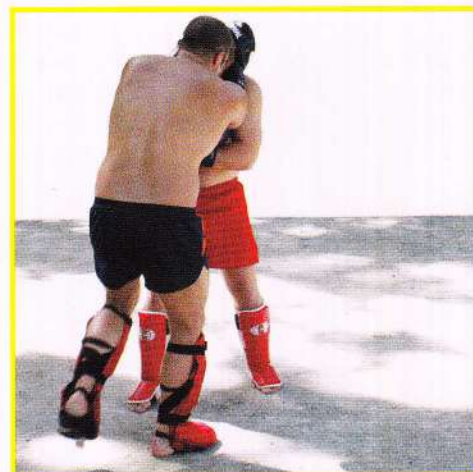


I pull Kirill's head down using both of my hands, thrust my left hip forward, and deliver a straight left knee to his midsection.

9



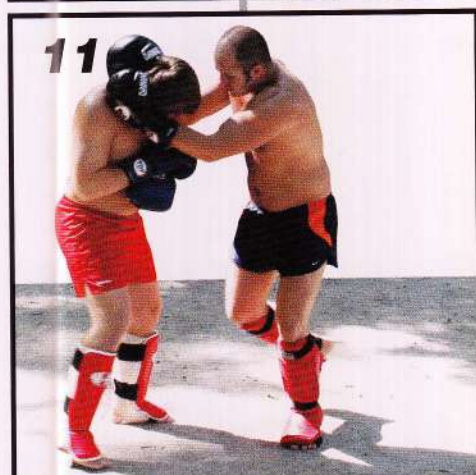
Pulling down on Kirill's head using both of my hands, I move my head to the right side of his head and plant my left foot on the ground behind me.







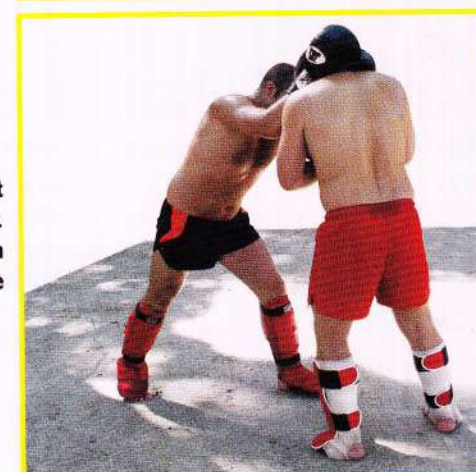
As I step my left foot to the outside of Kirill's right leg, I pull his head toward my right side. This causes him to step forward with his left foot.



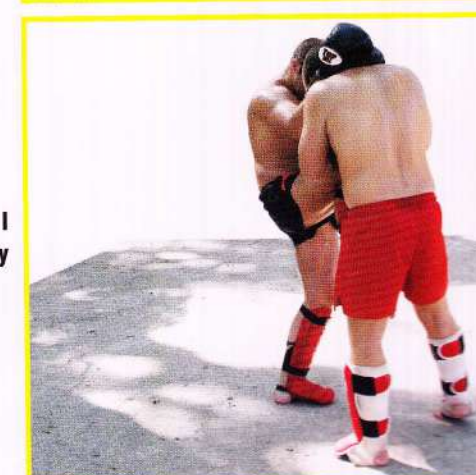
The instant Kirill steps his left foot forward, I step my right leg back to create space and reposition my head to the left side of his head.



Still pulling down on Kirill's head, I plant my right foot on the ground behind me. Notice how this creates separation between our bodies, which will allow me to generate more power in the knee strike.



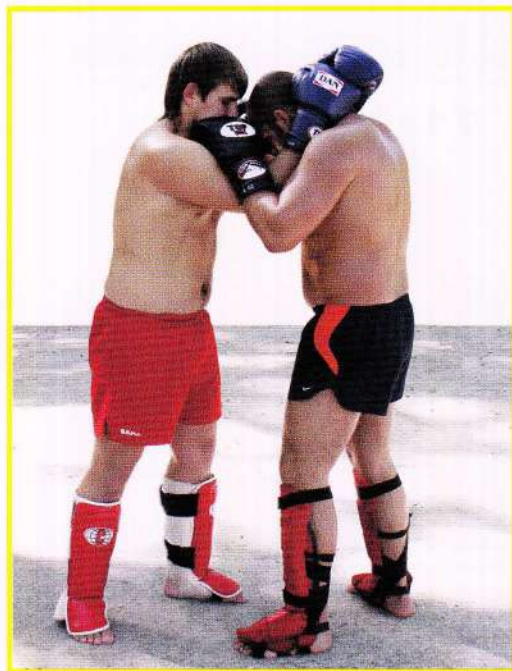
Continuing to pull down on Kirill's head, I thrust my right hip forward and drive my right knee upward into his face.





## COUNTER MUAY THAI CLINCH

Any time your opponent manages to secure the Muay Thai clinch, the first thing you should focus on is keeping your posture erect. If you allow him to pull your head down, he can use the previous technique to disrupt your balance. Once that happens, devastating knee strikes are just around the corner. Maintaining an erect posture provides separation between your bodies, and separation better allows you to utilize an escape such as the one I demonstrate below. In this particular technique, cross-face your opponent the instant he establishes his grips. As you force his head backward, his arms straighten, eliminating his leverage to pull your head down. Most of the time your opponent will disengage the instant you apply the cross-face, but there are those who will attempt to hang on. In such a situation, use his stubbornness to your advantage by wrapping the hand of your cross-facing arm around the back of his head, pushing his head to the side, and then throwing an upward knee to his temple.

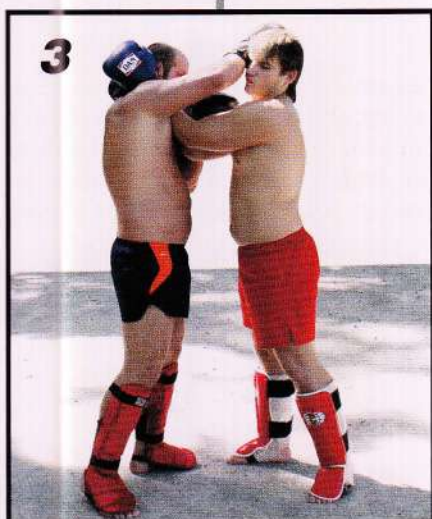


Kirill has managed to secure the Muay Thai clinch, giving him control of my head. In order to survive I must escape.

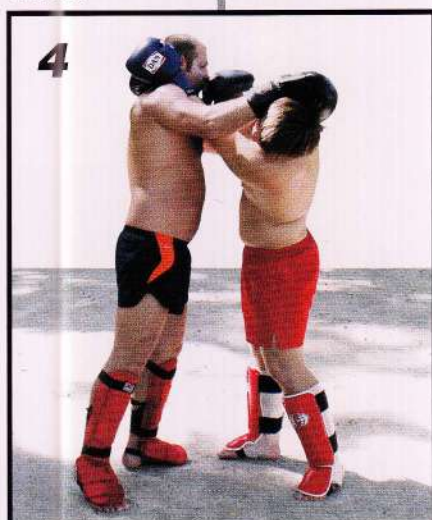


I straighten my posture and pull my head up to create separation, and then drive my right forearm into the right side of Kirill's head.

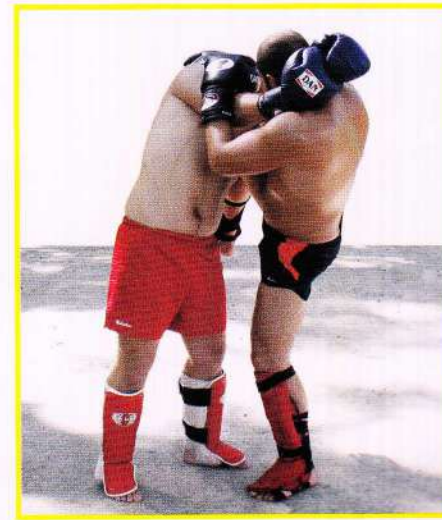




Keeping my posture erect, I extend my right arm into the right side of Kirill's face. Notice how this creates more separation between our bodies.



As I continue to create separation by driving my right arm into the right side of Kirill's head, his arms straighten. It is important to notice that my right arm is hooked over the top of his left arm and my left arm is hooked over the top of his right arm. This traps his arms in place. If it is late in the fight and both of you are covered in sweat, your opponent will most likely be able to pull his arms free, in which case you should return to your fighting stance. However, if it's the beginning of the fight or your opponent is wearing large gloves, it is possible to keep his arms locked in this position. In such a scenario, you can use your cross-face to force his head to the side and land a knee strike to this temple. In most situations throwing knee strikes to your opponent's head is risky because he can underhook your leg and execute a takedown, but you don't have to worry about such risks in this particular situation. With both of his arms tied up, his offense is very limited.



Having trapped Kirill's arms, I drive his head toward my right side using my right arm and throw a right knee to his temple. From here, I will either throw more knee strikes to his head or disengage and reestablish my fighting stance.



## MUAY THAI CLINCH ESCAPE

When it comes to the getting caught in the Muay Thai clinch, the more escapes you know, the better chance you'll have at avoiding devastating knee strikes. The nice thing about this technique is that it can also be used to counter the dirty boxing clinch, which is where your opponent cups one hand around the back of your head to form a single collar tie, pulls you off balance, and then throws punches at your face with his free hand. Wrestlers tend to use the dirty boxing clinch quite frequently, and it's in your best interest to escape it as quickly as possible. The escape demonstrated below is pretty simple—you shrug your shoulder up into your opponent's collar tie, while at the same time rotating your hips and shoulders in a circular direction. In addition to ripping your opponent's hands from your head, your shoulder snap also momentarily exposes one side of his body, making him vulnerable to strikes and takedowns.



Kirill has managed to secure the Muay Thai clinch, giving him control of my head. In order to survive I must escape.

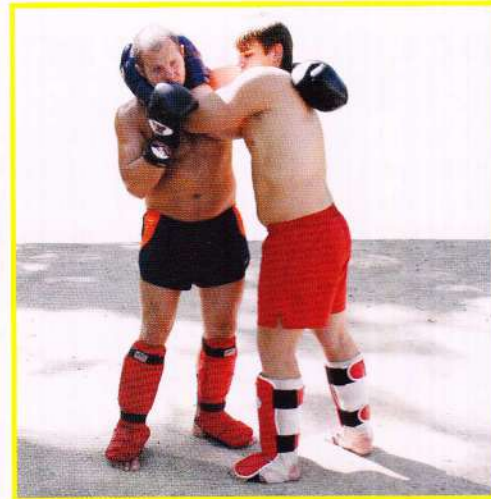


To begin my escape, I wrap my left arm over Kirill's right arm and shoulder.

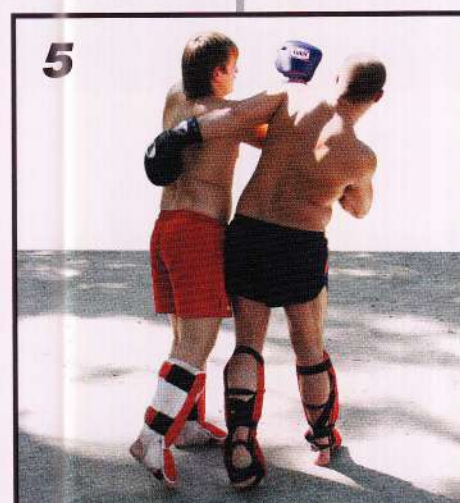




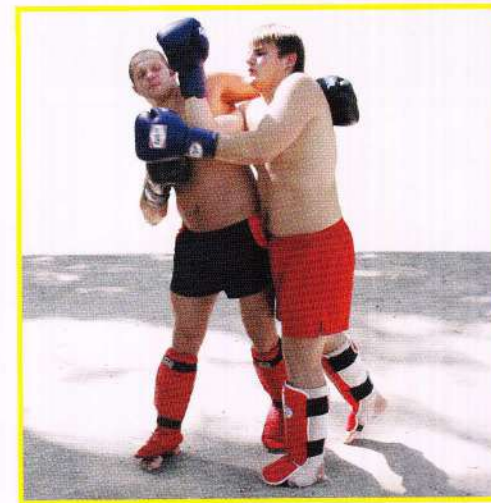
I rotate my hips in a clockwise direction and drive my left shoulder upward into Kirill's right arm.



Continuing to rotate my hips and drive my left shoulder upward into Kirill's right arm, I lean my head back and create separation between us.



I continue to rotate my hips, drive my left shoulder up into Kirill's right arm, and lean my head back. Having been explosive in my actions, I break his right grip on my head. In addition to having escaped the Muay Thai clinch, I have also forced Kirill's body to turn away from me. To capitalize on his compromised positioning, I will either follow up with strikes or work for a takedown.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

\*When using this technique to counter the Muay Thai clinch, always break the grip your opponent has established with his far arm. For example, if he has his left foot forward, drive your left shoulder into his right arm. If he has his right foot forward, drive your right shoulder into his left arm.



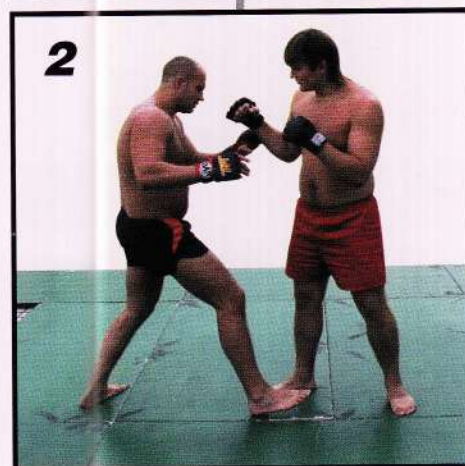
## DOUBLE-LEG SCOOP SLAM

The double-leg scoop slam is one of my favorite techniques for taking an opponent to the ground, and I've used it successfully in numerous fights. The takedown itself is rather simple—the difficult part is breaking the distance and getting past your opponent's lines of defense, which are his hands and hips. To prevent him from blocking your forward progression by putting his hands on you and sprawling his hips and legs back, you've got to set up your shot. There are many ways to accomplish this. You can throw a combination of punches to get your opponent to raise his guard, and then drop low and attack his legs. You can also slip one of your opponent's strikes utilizing an evasion technique shown earlier in the book, and then use the forward momentum of your counter to secure the takedown. If you make the mistake of shooting blindly forward, the chances are you'll not only fail with the takedown, but also end up in a compromising position.

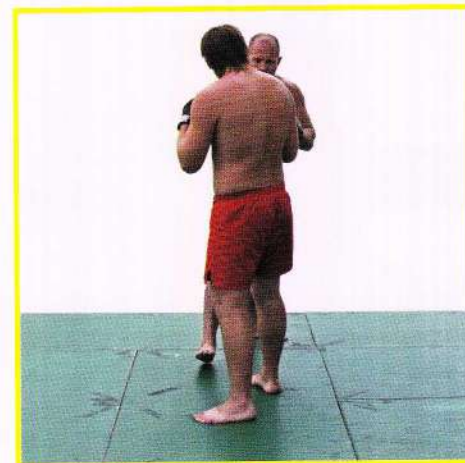
It is important to pay special attention to the photos in the sequence below because I execute the double-leg takedown differently than most. Fighters who have a background in amateur wrestling usually shoot forward to secure control of their opponent's legs and then redirect their energy to the side, a technique commonly referred to as "turning the corner." The takedown I demonstrate below shares many of the same principles—I shoot my shoulder into my opponent's waistline, position my head to the outside of his body, and cup my arms around the back of his knees. However, instead of dropping my knee to the ground and redirecting my forward momentum horizontally, I remain standing, pick my opponent up, and continue to drive straight into him. I achieve the same goal as with the wrestling version of the double-leg, which is to take my opponent to the mat, but instead of coming down on top of my opponent, I remain standing. Not only does this make me less vulnerable to getting caught in a submission, but it also better allows me to pass my opponent's guard, employ devastating ground and pound, or even drop back for a foot lock. I suggest learning both methods and then doing what works best for you.



I'm in my fighting stance searching for an opening to attack. Notice that we're both in a southpaw stance.



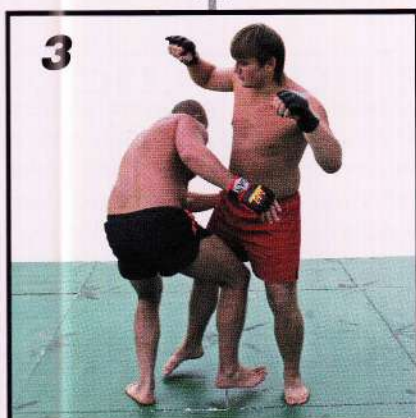
I close the distance between Kirill and me by stepping my right foot forward along his centerline.



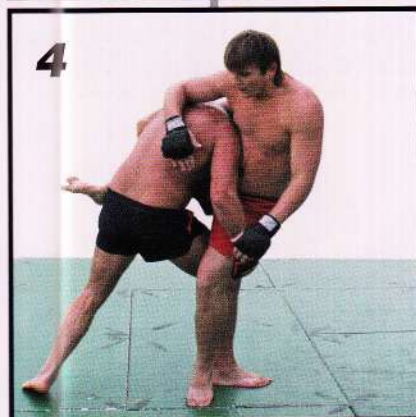
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*Use strikes to close the distance and set up the takedown.
- \*When driving forward, cup both hands around the back of your opponent's knees, lift him into the air, and then slam him down to the mat.
- \*Avoid falling to the mat with your opponent.





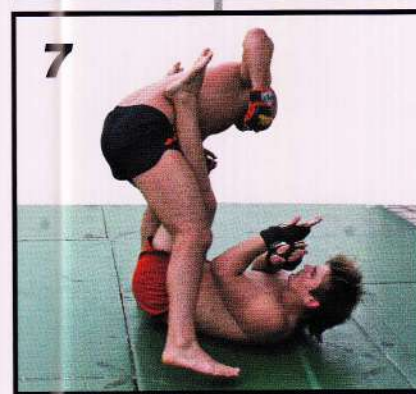
I continue to close the distance by sliding my left foot up to my right, and then stepping my right foot deeper between Kirill's legs.



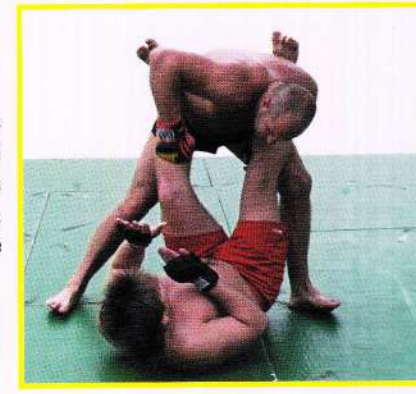
As I step my right foot deep between Kirill's legs, I drive my right shoulder into his waist, wrap both of my hands around the back of his knees, and begin scooping his legs off the mat.



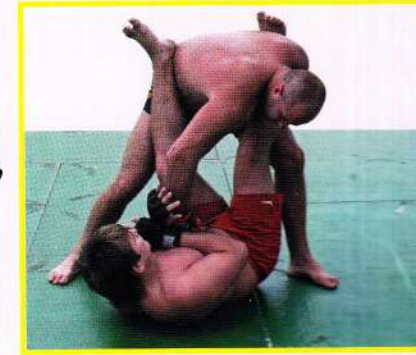
Stepping my left foot forward, I use my arms and the forward momentum of the shot to heft Kirill's legs into the air.



Having been fluid with my movements, Kirill slams down to his back. To stack his legs over his body and limit his movement, I press forward into his legs. From here, I can use my positioning to secure a leg lock, pass his guard, or employ ground and pound. I decide to employ striking and draw my right hand back.



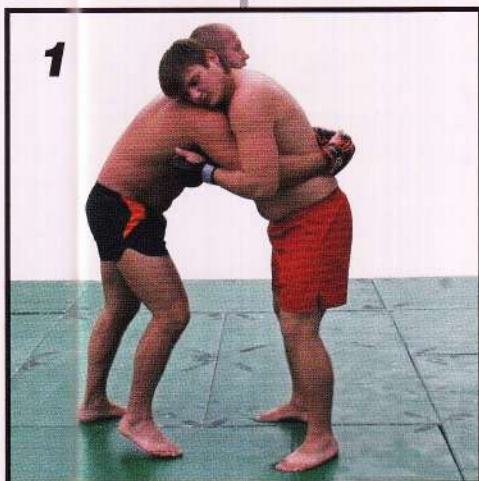
Kirill is still stunned from the takedown. To capitalize, I deliver a hard right hand to his abdomen.



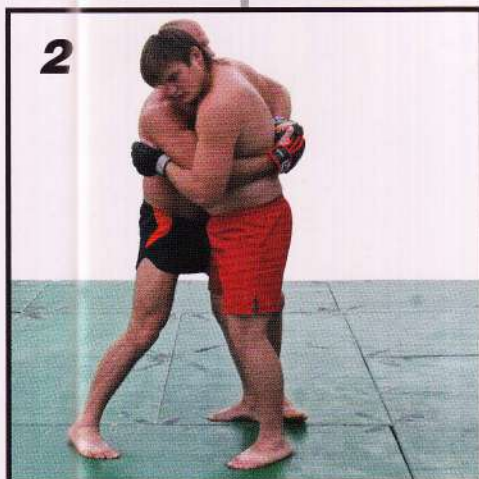


## OUTSIDE TRIP FROM OVER-UNDER BODY LOCK

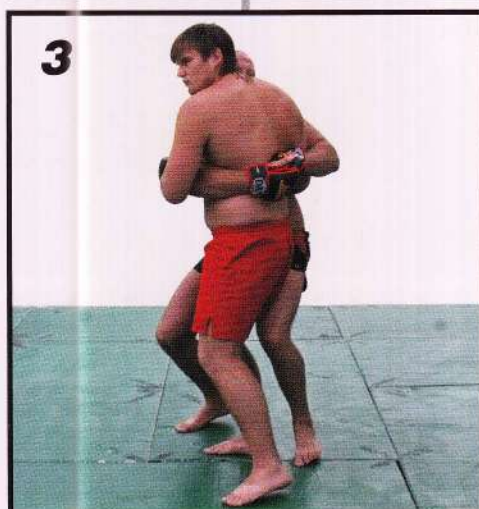
It's quite common to end up in the over-under position while clinch fighting. Although it's considered a neutral position because both you and your opponent have one underhook and one overhook, there are certainly ways to get the upper hand. One such way is to pull your hips away from your opponent's body, drive your shoulders into his body, and clasp your hands together near his lower back. Securing this position not only traps your opponent's underhook arm to his ribs, but it also straightens his posture and allows you to circle around to his side. Once accomplished, executing an outside trip is as easy as pulling your opponent over your leg. The tricky part is twisting your body toward your overhook at the same moment that you execute the trip. This can be difficult to manage in the beginning, but committing to the twist is vital for ensuring that you land in the top position.



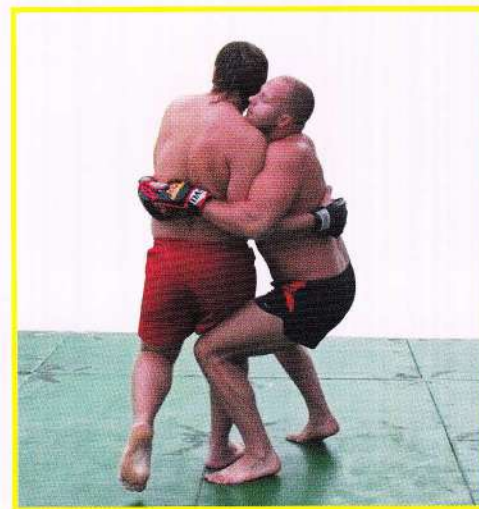
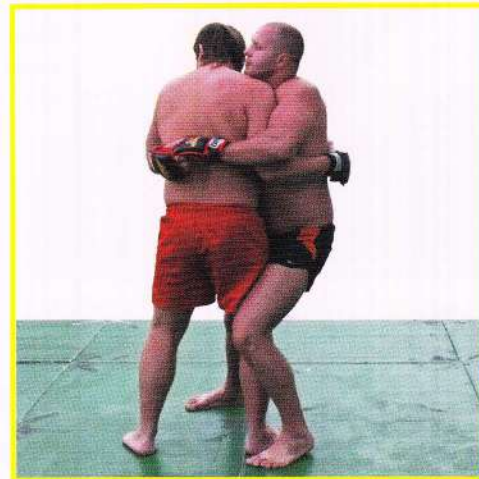
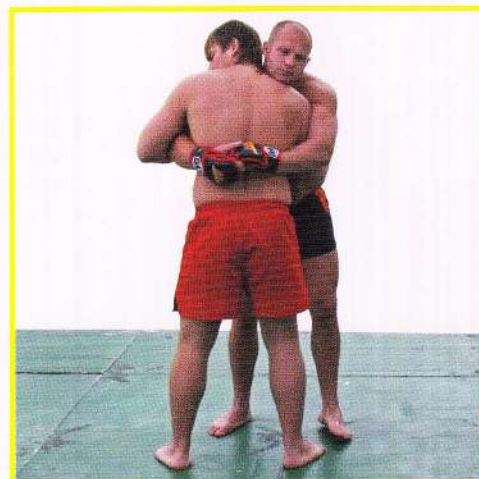
I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. To secure upper body control from the over-under position, I push my butt backward, drive my shoulders into his shoulders, and grip my hands together just above his waistline.



I suck my arms toward my body, forcing Kirill to posture. At the same time, I circle my left leg around his right leg and plant my foot behind his right heel.



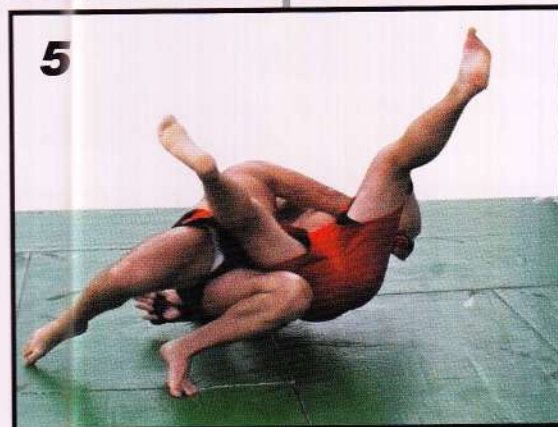
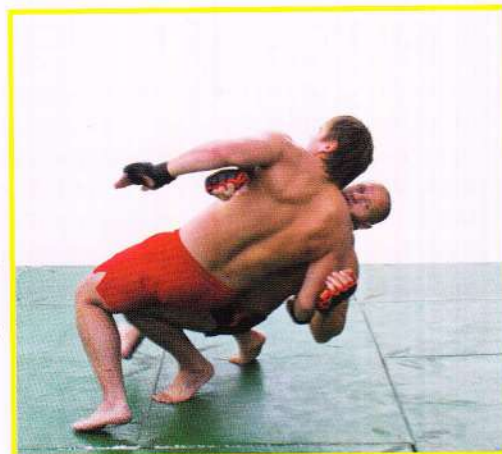
Continuing to circle around Kirill's body, I sit my butt toward the mat and begin pulling him backward over my left leg. It is important to notice that I am currently circling my body in a clockwise direction. However, now that I'm positioned to execute the outside trip, I will twist my body in a counterclockwise direction. Also notice how my legs are bent as though I'm sitting in an imaginary chair.







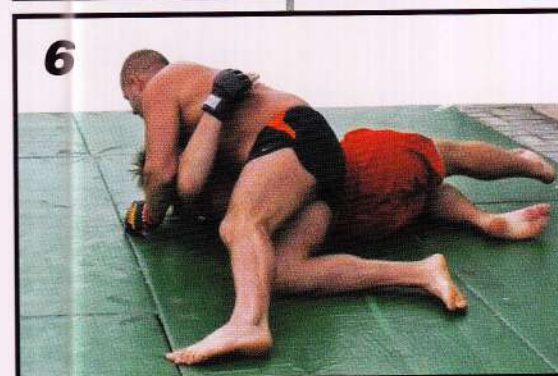
As I pull Kirill over my left leg, I twist my body hard in a counterclockwise direction. It is imperative that you execute this step with absolute commitment. If you fail to commit to twisting your body, your opponent will land on top of you and secure dominant control.



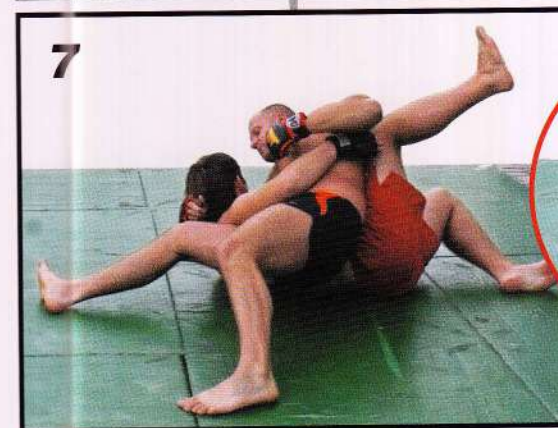
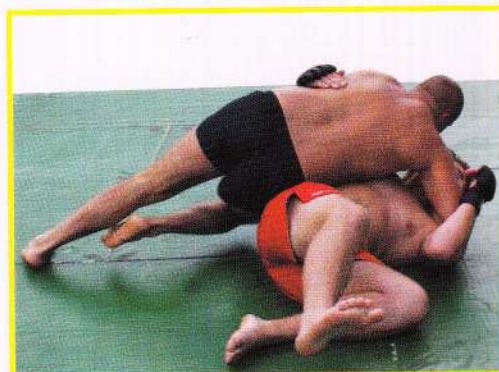
I continue to twist my body in a counterclockwise direction and pull Kirill over my left leg. Because I committed to the twist and was fluid in my movements, Kirill trips over my leg and gets tossed toward his back.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*When you clasp your hands together, position them low on your opponent's back for the best control.
- \*The key to succeeding with this technique is keeping your opponent's posture erect. This is best achieved through a low grip and tight upper-body control.



Still twisting my body in a counterclockwise direction, I force Kirill onto his left side the instant he lands on his back. At the same time, I wrap my right arm around the left side of his head, post on my left foot, and begin sliding my right leg underneath my left leg.

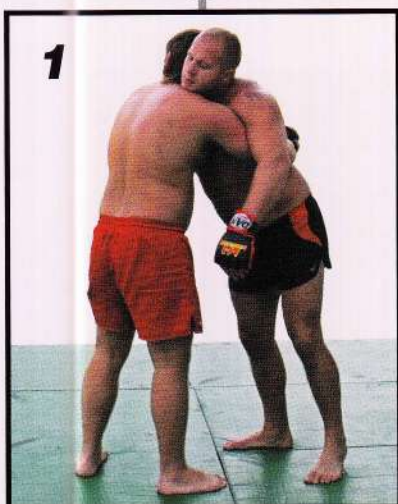


With my left foot still posted on the mat, I slide my right leg underneath Kirill's right shoulder. To secure what judo practitioners refer to as the scarf hold position, I wrap my right arm around the back of his head and settle my weight down on his torso. With my opponent pinned on his back, I can unleash a ground and pound assault or begin working for a submission. In this particular case, I cock my left arm back to throw a punch at his face.

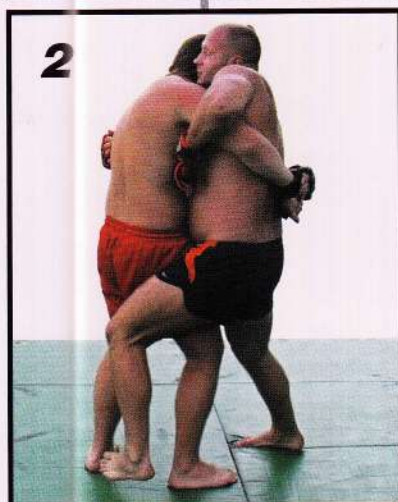


## BODY LOCK COUNTER TO OUTSIDE TRIP

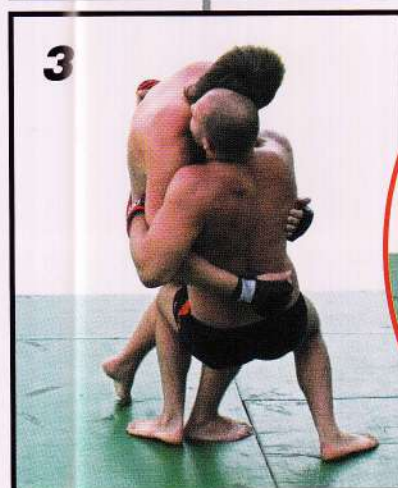
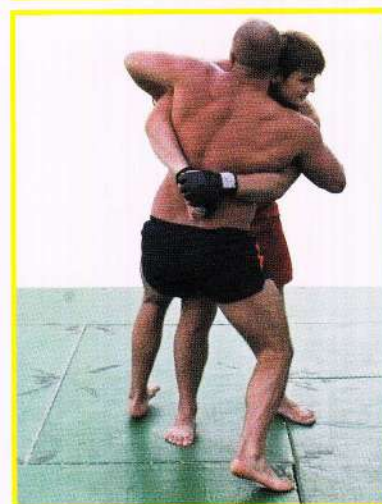
In the previous sequence, I demonstrated how to execute an outside trip from the over-under control position. Here I show you how to utilize the exact same technique when your opponent secures double underhooks. Before you attempt to use the outside trip in this scenario, you must first nullify your opponent's underhooks. To accomplish this, sink your hips back and drive your weight forward. If you look at the first photo in the sequence below, you'll notice how this defensive tactic stretches out my opponent's arms and forces his clasped hands to slide high up on my back. From this position, it becomes very difficult for your opponent to step toward you, get chest to chest, and secure a tight body lock. Safe from getting picked up and slammed, you can immediately progress with the outside trip. Just as in the previous technique, the first step is to force your opponent to posture. However, in this scenario he has his hands clasped behind your back instead of the other way around. To accomplish your goal, wrap your arms over your opponent's arms, clamp down tight, and then pull his arms up into your armpits. Once he is standing erect, circle around him, pull him over your grounded leg, and commit to the twist. When done correctly, it is a very smooth technique that is difficult to block.



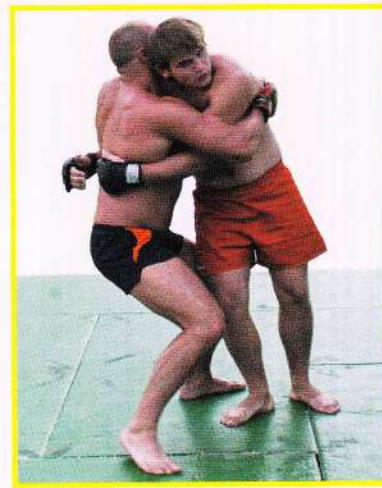
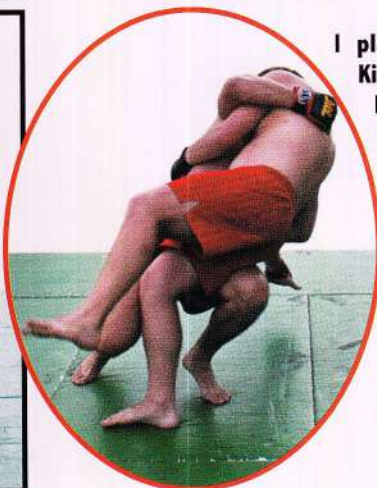
While tied up in the clinch with Kirill, he manages to slide his arms underneath my arms and clasp his hands together in the center of my back. Before he has a chance to secure a tight body lock and execute a takedown, I drop my hips back and lean my weight forward.



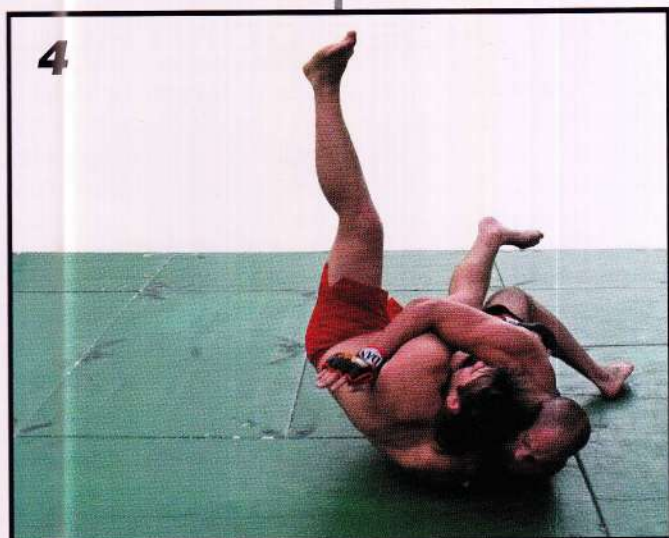
I hook my left arm over Kirill's right arm, clamp down, and then pull his right arm upward into my armpit to straighten his posture. At the same time, I step my left leg behind his right leg.



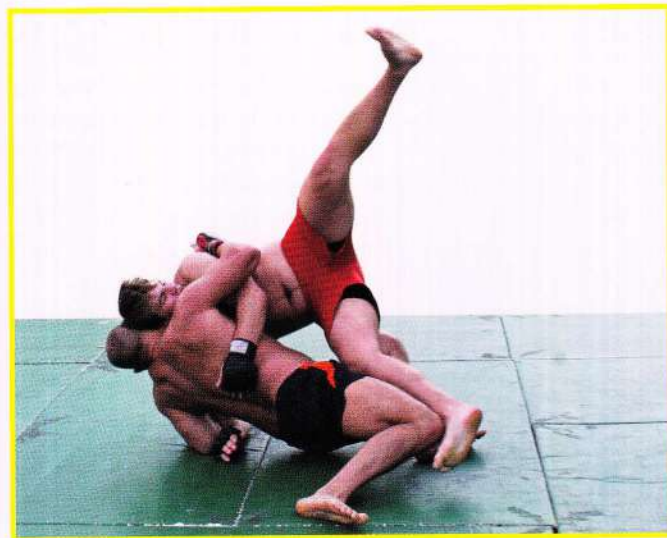
I plant my left foot behind Kirill's right foot, sit my butt toward the mat, and begin twisting my body in a counterclockwise direction.







Continuing to twist my body in a counterclockwise direction, I pull Kirill over my left leg, which causes him to trip and tumble onto the mat.



The instant Kirill lands on his back, I post on my left foot, begin sliding my right leg under my left leg, wrap my right arm around the left side of his head, and distribute my weight over his torso.



Having established the scarf hold position, I keep my weight distributed over Kirill's torso and draw my left hand back to land a short hook to the side of his face.



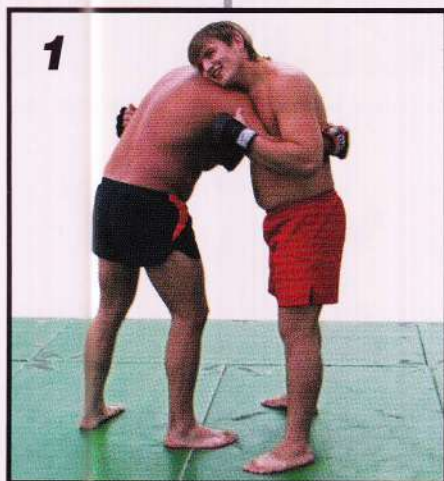
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* The instant your opponent secures double underhooks, sink your hips back and lean your weight forward. This will prevent him from securing a tight body lock around your waist and taking you to the ground.
- \* When utilizing this technique, speed and commitment are vital to its success.

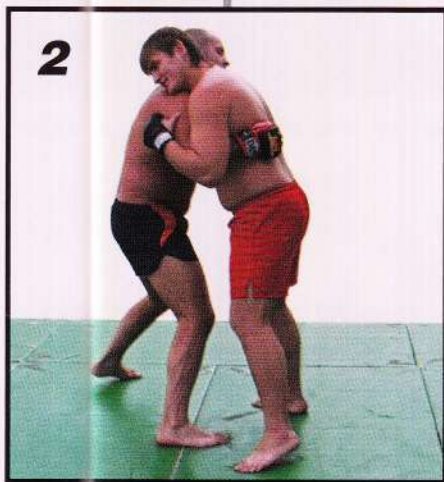
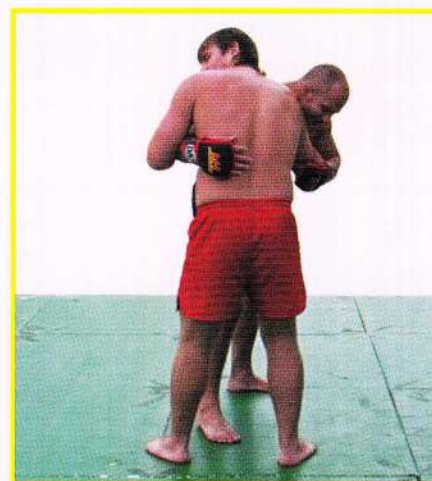


## INSIDE LEG TRIP FROM OVER-UNDER CONTROL

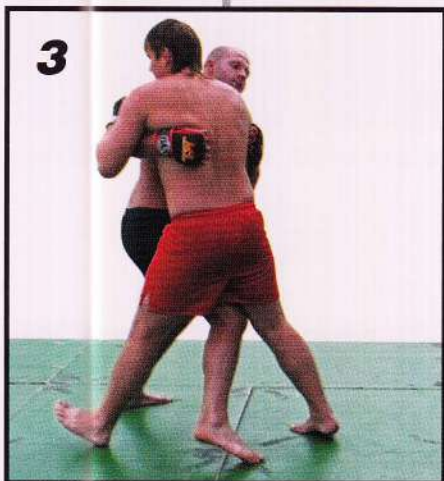
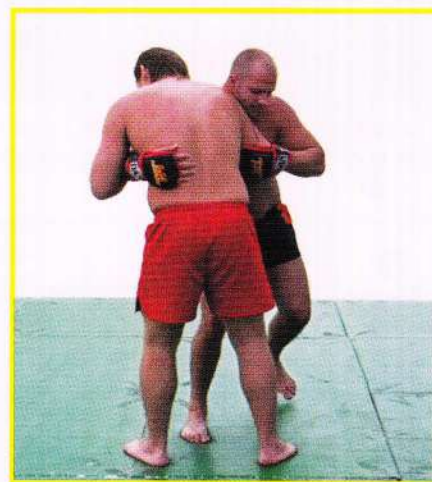
The inside leg trip is a very effective takedown that can be applied on any opponent, regardless of his size or weight. In the sequence below I demonstrate how to utilize it from the over-under position. To set it up, you want to force your opponent to step one of his legs forward so you can attack it. If you want to attack his left leg, take an outward step with your left leg and then pull him toward your right side. To maintain his balance, he has to step his left foot forward. This brings his leg much closer to you, allowing you to hook it with one of your legs and execute the takedown. It's a simple technique, but there are several things you must remember when practicing it. First, position your head on the opposite side of the leg you're tripping. For example, if you hook your opponent's left leg, your head should be on the right side of his body. This will prevent your opponent from flipping you over and putting you on your back when you land in his guard. Second, when you come down on your opponent, you want to be high in his guard to prevent him from quickly locking in a submission. Once you stabilize your position on top, a good option is to posture up and begin your ground and pound assault.



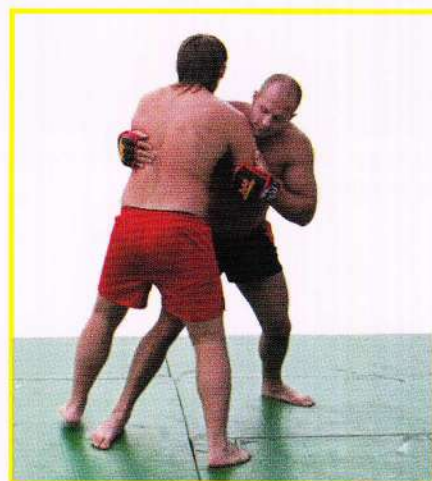
I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. We're in a neutral position because we both have an overhook and an underhook.



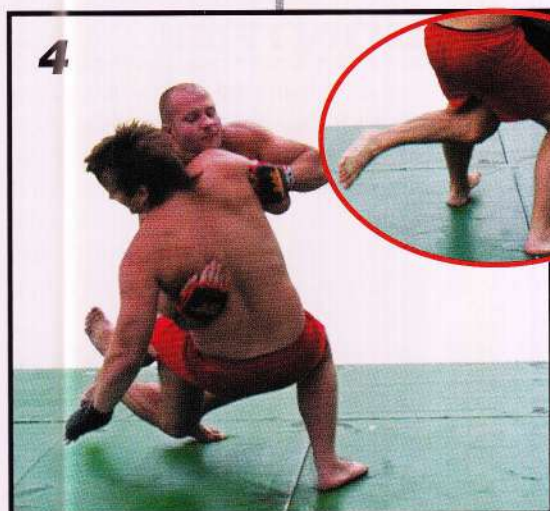
In order to generate momentum and set up the takedown, I take an outward step with my left foot and pull Kirill in a clockwise direction toward my right side. My goal is to force him to step his left foot forward to maintain his balance.



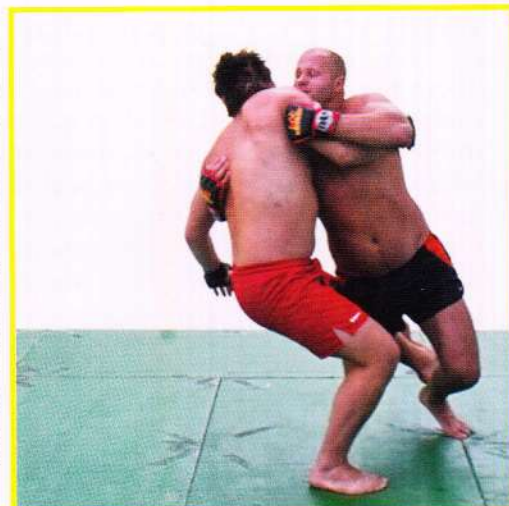
To maintain his balance, Kirill steps his left foot forward.



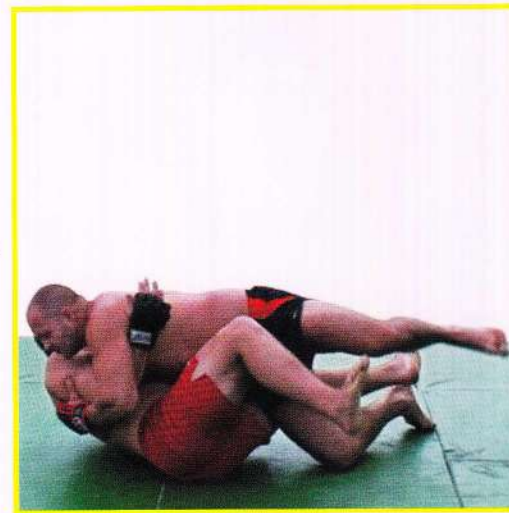




The instant Kirill steps his left foot forward, I slam my chest into his chest and hook my right leg around the back of his left leg. Next, I pull my right heel toward my butt, scooping his left foot off the mat. To force him to the mat, I fall toward my right hip. Notice how my head is positioned on the right side of Kirill's body. This will prevent him from being able to sweep me over to my back when we come down on the mat.



Kirill lands on his back and I fall in his guard.



The momentum of the takedown carries me forward and places me high in Kirill's guard. Notice how my weight is distributed toward his right side to prevent him from rolling over his left shoulder and reversing our positioning.



Planting both of my feet on the mat to establish my base, I posture up and cock my left hand back.

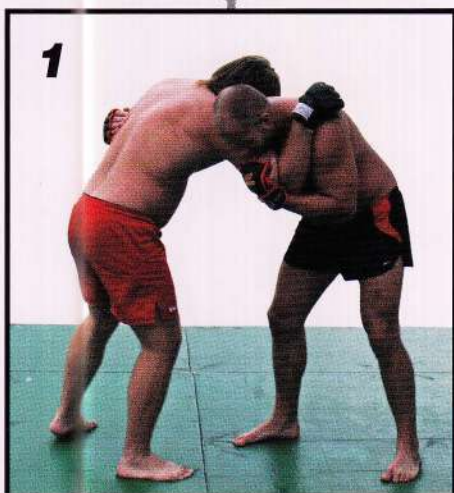
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*To set up the takedown, force your opponent to step the leg you want to attack toward you.
- \*Position your head on the opposite side of the leg you're attacking.

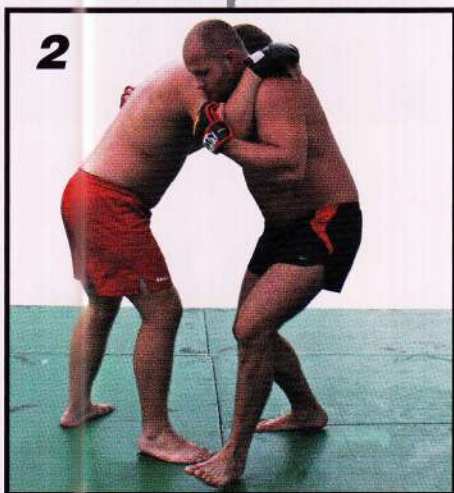


## OSOTO-GARI FROM OVER-UNDER CONTROL

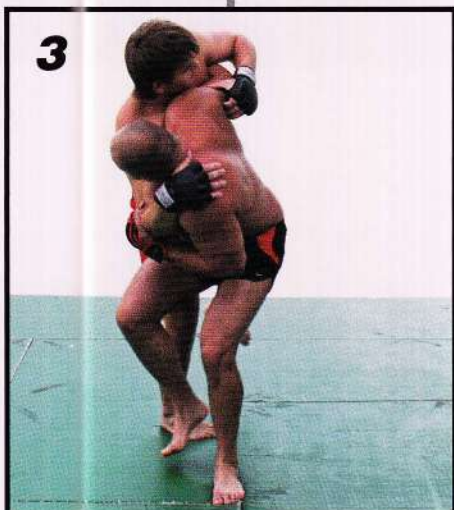
There are numerous control positions that you can utilize when in the clinch. So far I've demonstrated how to execute a throw from over-under control, as well as how to throw your opponent when he manages to secure double underhooks. In this sequence, I've secured an underhook and a triceps grip and my opponent has secured an underhook and a collar tie, which is where he has one hand hooked around the back of my neck. It is a very common tie-up position, and knowing how to get the upper hand is crucial. In this scenario, I use my grips to pull my opponent toward me to force him to take a forward step. Just as his foot touches down, I drive back into him, step in front of the leg he brought forward, and then execute an outside leg trip, which in judo is called osoto-gari. When done correctly, it is a very safe and effective technique.



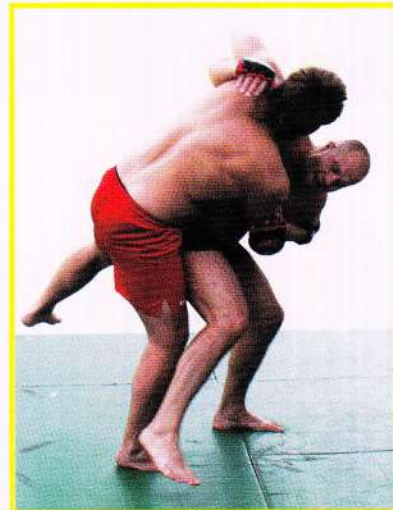
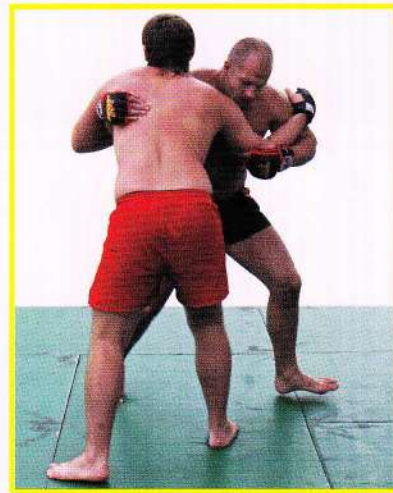
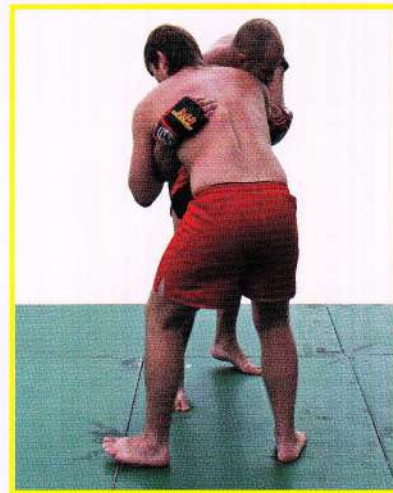
I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. I have a right underhook and I'm gripping his right triceps with my left hand. He has a left overhook and a right collar tie. To set up osoto-gari, I pull Kirill toward me using my grips.



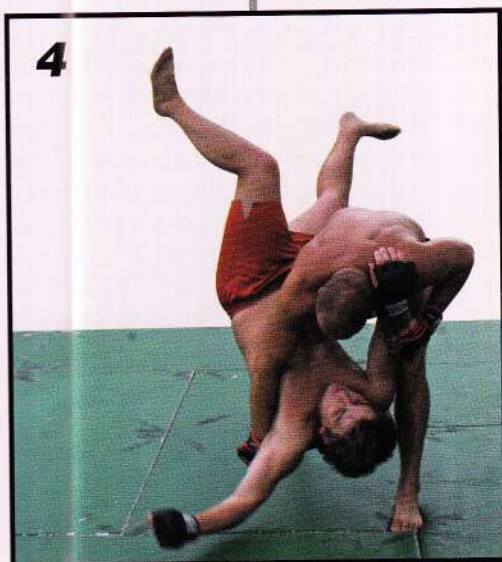
Having pulled Kirill toward me, the majority of his weight is placed on his lead leg. The instant I feel this forward shift, I step my left foot to the outside of his right foot. Notice how I'm controlling his right arm by gripping his triceps with my left hand.



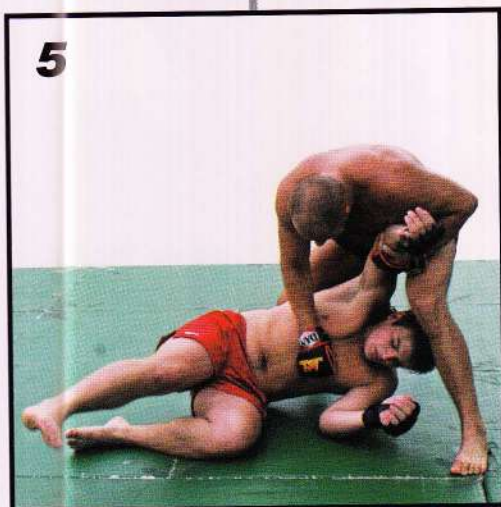
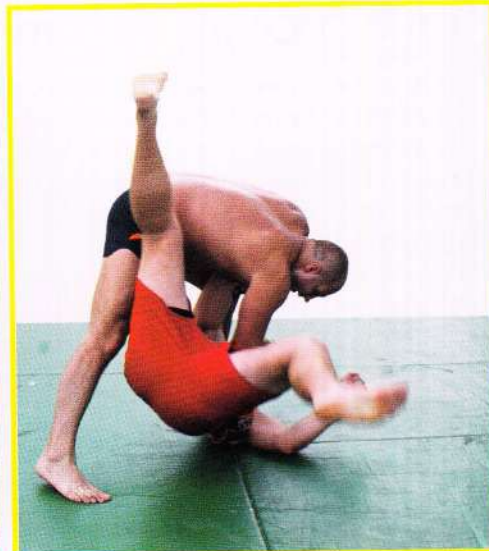
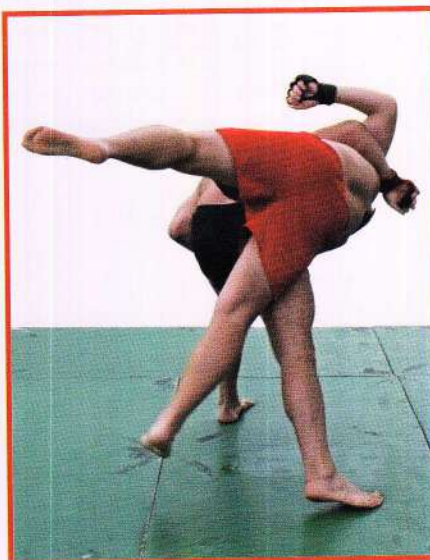
Twisting my upper body in a counterclockwise direction, I circle my right leg around the outside of Kirill's right leg. At the same time, I drive my right underhook upward into his left armpit and pull on his right arm using my left triceps tie.



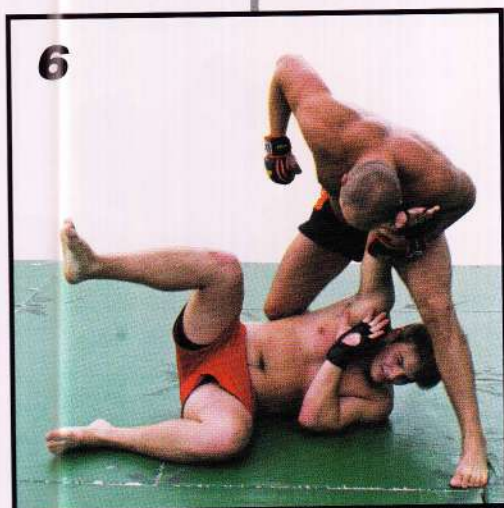
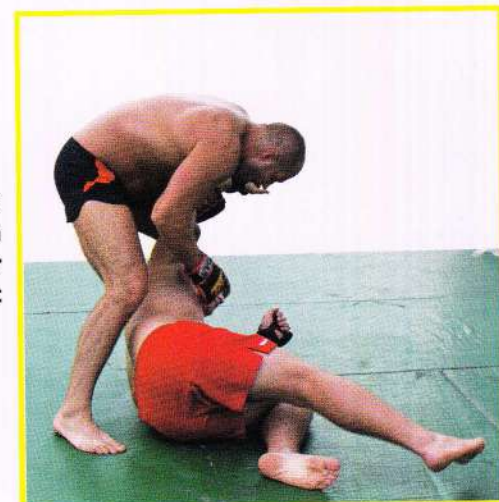




As I continue to twist my upper body in a counterclockwise direction and drive my right arm upward into Kirill's left armpit, I plant my right foot on the mat. The combination of these actions forces Kirill to trip over my right leg. Notice how once he is airborne, I use my right underhook to drive his body toward the mat.



As Kirill falls onto his right side, I maintain control of his right arm. From here, I can use his positioning to lock in an armbar or throw downward strikes with my right hand.



I cock my right hand back and prepare to throw downward punches at Kirill's face and body.

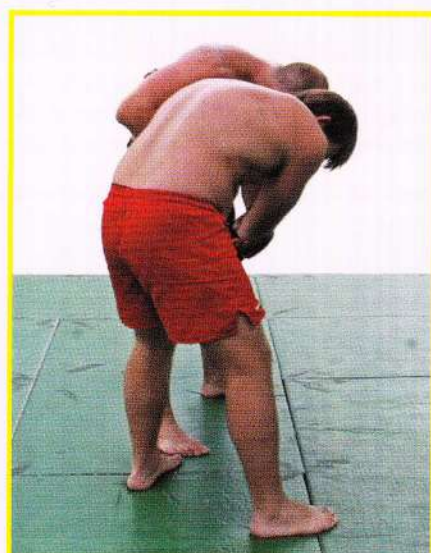
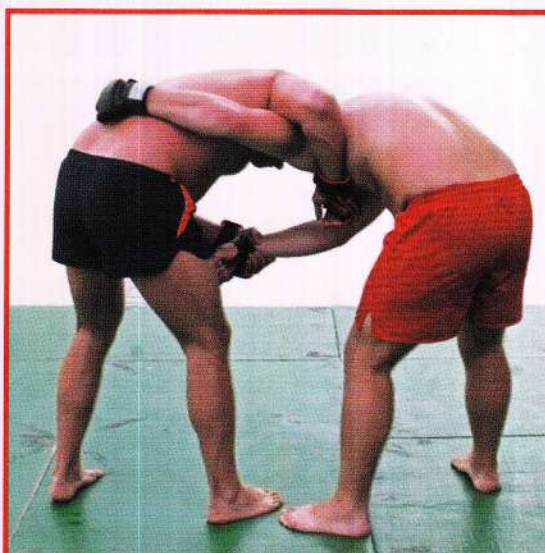
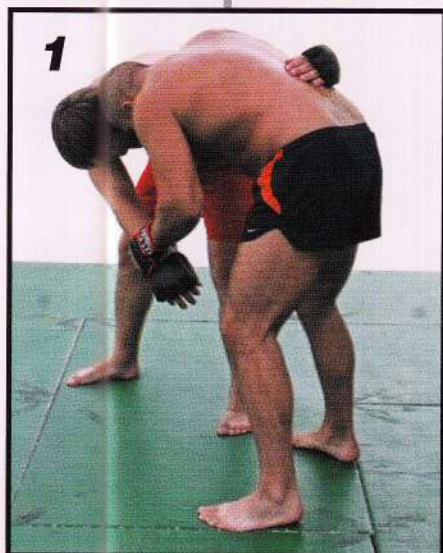
#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*To set up the throw, pull your opponent toward you and then use his forward momentum against him by executing an outside trip.
- \*After stepping behind your opponent's leg, plant your foot on the mat.
- \*Execute the trip on the opposite side of your underhook.

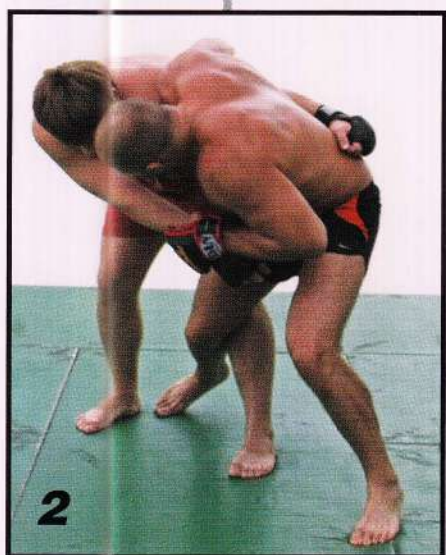


## HIP TOSS FROM WHIZZER & WRIST CONTROL

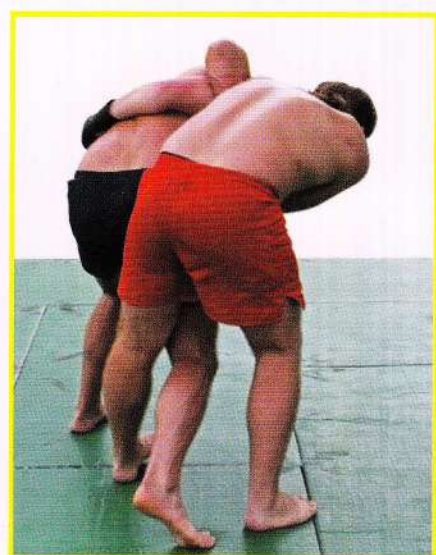
This is another takedown that works extremely well in MMA competition. If you look at the first photo in the sequence below, you'll notice that I have a tight overhook on my opponent's near arm and I'm grabbing his far wrist. There are many ways to end up here, but perhaps the most common way is to transition into this position from over-under control. To accomplish this, position your head on the same side of your opponent's body as your overhook, release your underhook, and grab your opponent's far wrist. Once you secure the position by clamping down tight with your overhook, which is often referred to as a whizzer, you're in an excellent position to execute the inside leg trip. Unlike a lot of throws, it is a very simple move to pull off. All you have to do is step your near leg deep between your opponent's legs, drive his shoulder toward the mat using your whizzer, and pull his wrist toward you. When done properly, it'll work a large percentage of the time. However, nothing works 100 percent of the time, making it important to always have a contingency plan. If your opponent defends against this takedown, you'll want to transition into another takedown or utilize the "failed hip toss to uppercut transition," which I demonstrate in the next sequence.



I'm tied up in the clinch with Kirill. To secure dominant control, I've established an overhook on his left arm, positioned my head on the left side of his body, and grabbed his right wrist with my left hand.



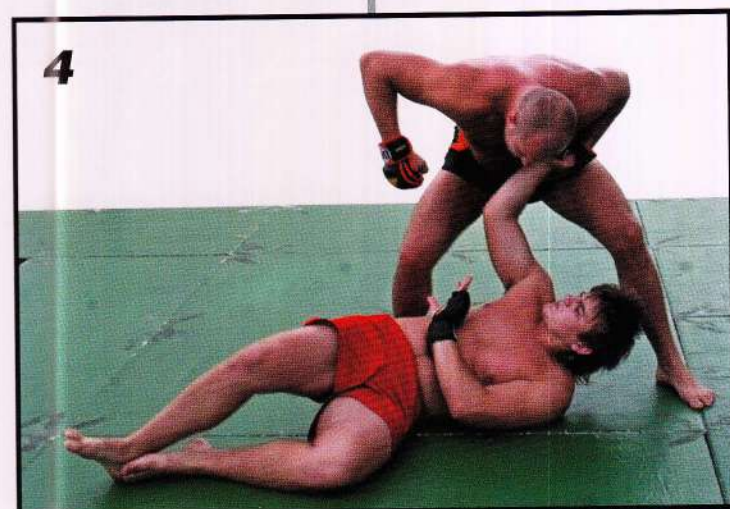
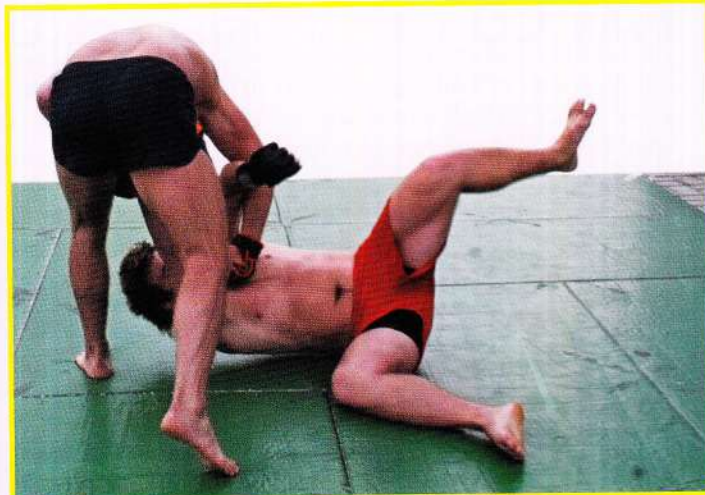
I step my right foot to the inside of Kirill's left leg, twist my body in a counterclockwise direction, drive my right shoulder toward the mat, thrust my right forearm up into his left armpit, and pull his right arm toward me using my left hand.



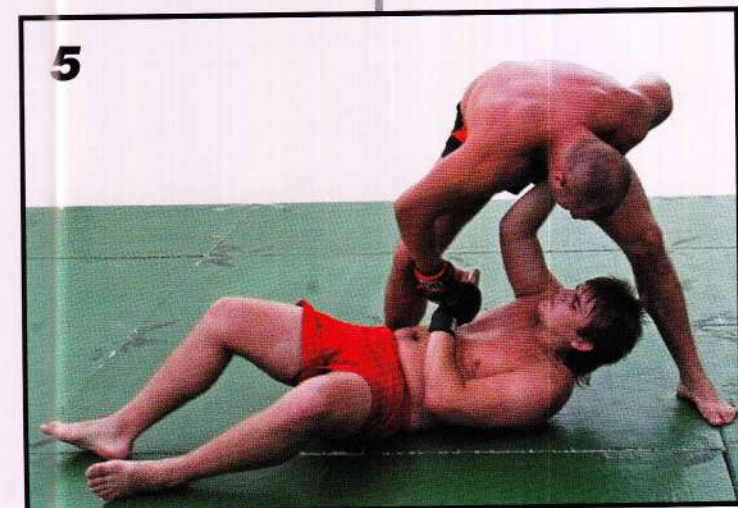
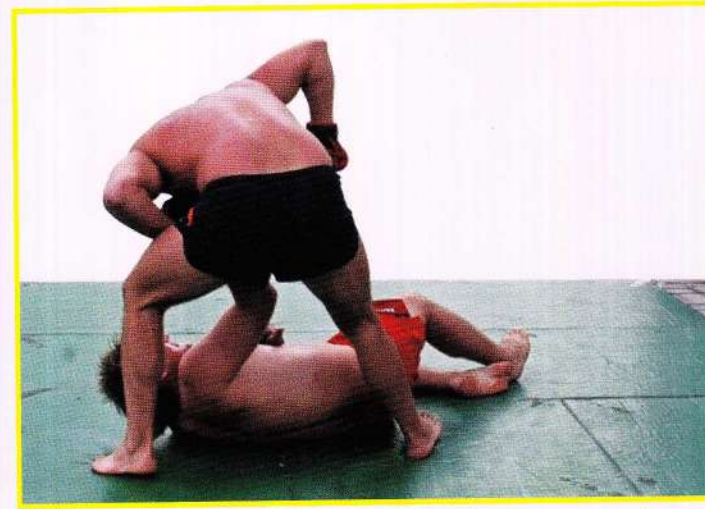




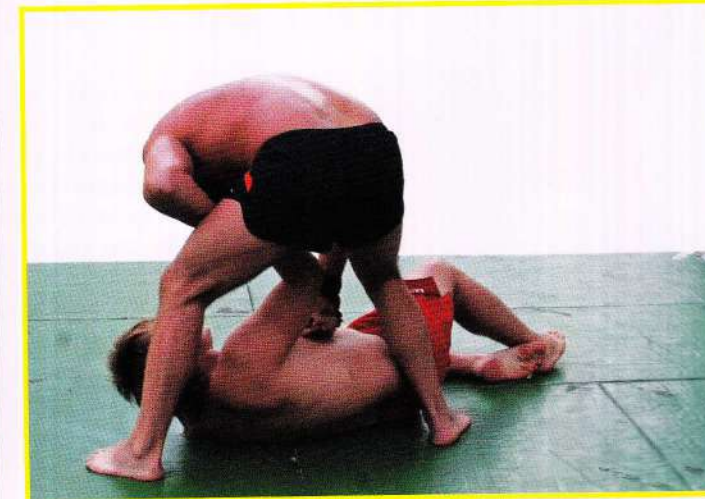
Continuing with my former actions, Kirill trips over my right leg and rolls over his right shoulder. It is important to notice that I've maintained control of his wrist to prevent him from posting his right hand on the mat and blocking the throw.



Kirill slams down on the mat and rolls onto his left side. Having maintained control of his right arm, I could quickly apply an armbar, but in this case I decide to employ some good old-fashioned ground and pound. I cock my right hand back and prepare to attack both his body and head with punches.



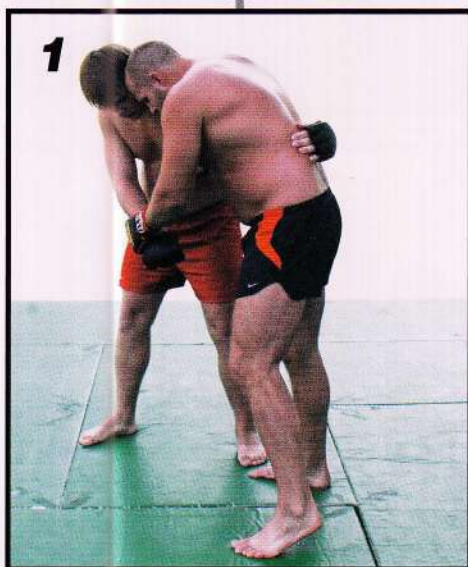
I land a right hook to Kirill's body.



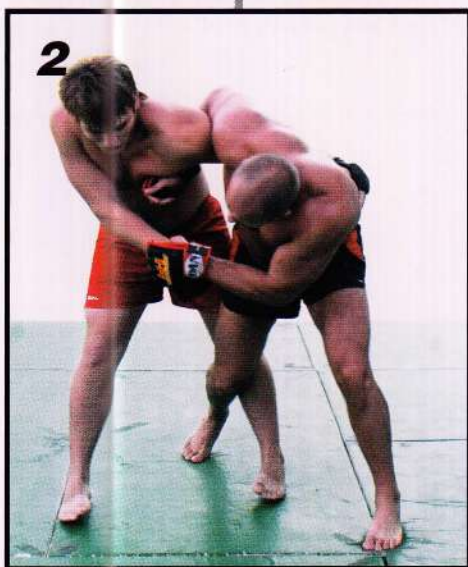
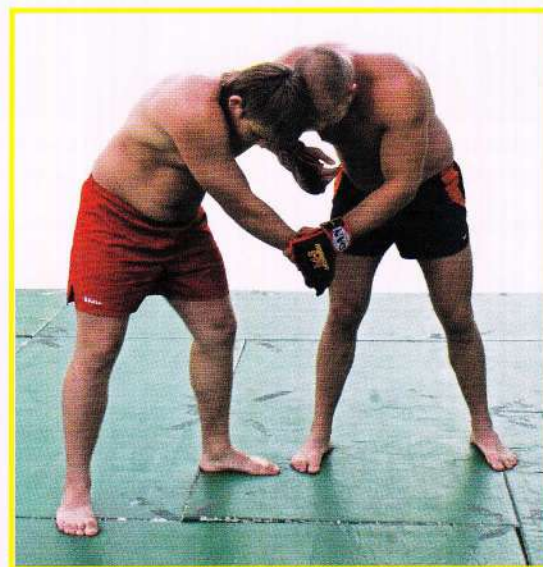


## FAILED HIP TOSS TO UPPERCUT TRANSITION

In this sequence I attempt to throw my opponent with the hip toss, but he counters by hopping on one foot and recovering his balance. Instead of circling and continuing to apply pressure with my whizzer in an attempt to drag him down, which would burn a lot of energy without the guarantee of success, I release my control and use my opponent's compromised positioning to land a big uppercut to the jaw. I used this technique against Mirko CroCop when we fought in the Pride Fighting Championships. Although the first technique failed, I remained on the attack by immediately transitioning into another. As I've mentioned before, no technique works 100 percent of the time. In order to be successful in MMA, it is mandatory that you learn how to string your attacks together. The more techniques you can launch back to back, the easier it will be to overwhelm your opponent and pull out the victory.



I'm tied up in the clinch with Kirill. I've positioned my head on the left side of his head, giving me a dominant overhook, and I'm controlling his right wrist with my left hand.



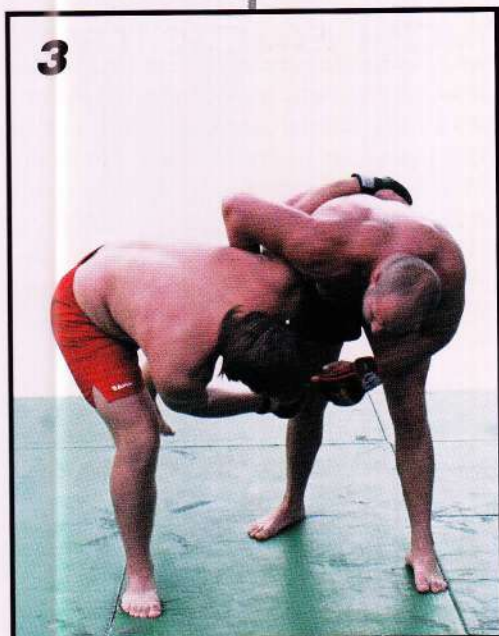
I step my right foot to the inside of Kirill's left leg, twist my body in a counterclockwise direction, drive my shoulder toward the mat, thrust my right forearm up into his left armpit, and pull his right arm toward me using my left hand.

### KEY CONCEPTS

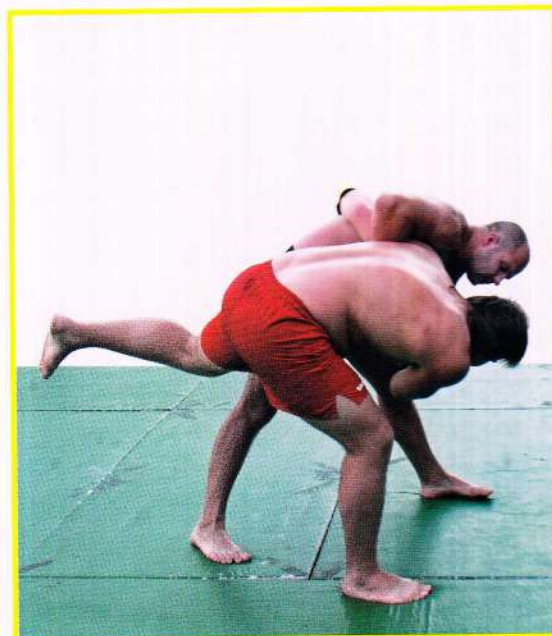
\*Commit 100 percent to the hip toss. If you're successful, secure top control and unleash your ground and pound. If your opponent defends the takedown, unleash with strikes before he can recover his balance.

\*Flow from one technique to the other as if they were a part of the same move.

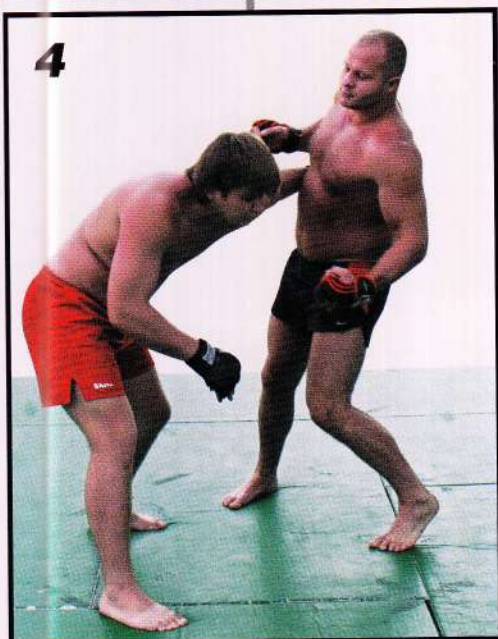




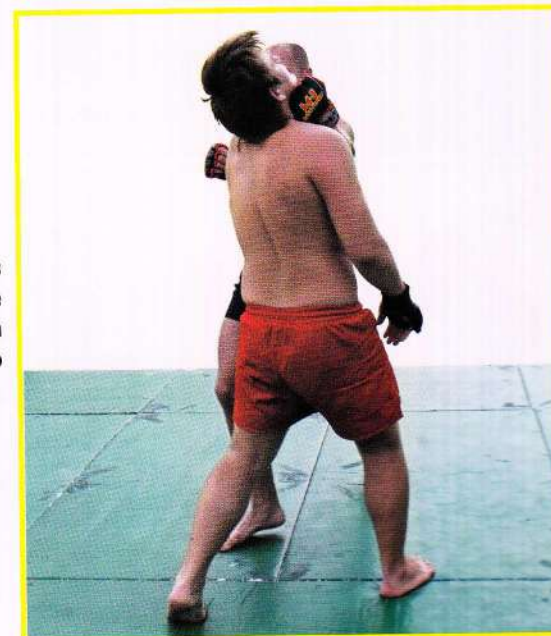
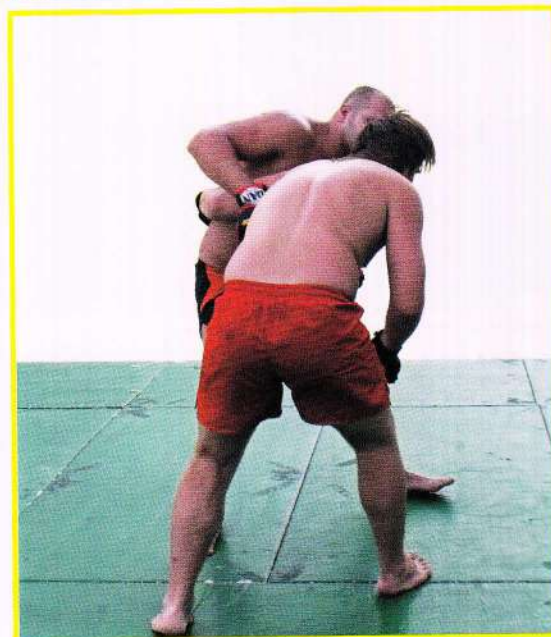
Kirill trips over my right leg, but he prevents the takedown by balancing on his posted right leg.



Before Kirill can reestablish his balance, I let go of his right wrist and throw a left uppercut toward his jaw.



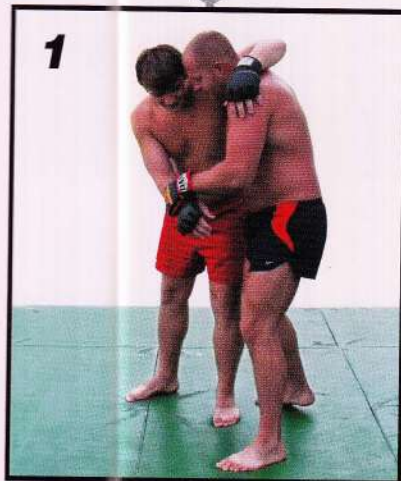
I land a heavy uppercut to Kirill's jaw. From here, I can continue forward with a striking combination or use his discombobulated state to execute a takedown.



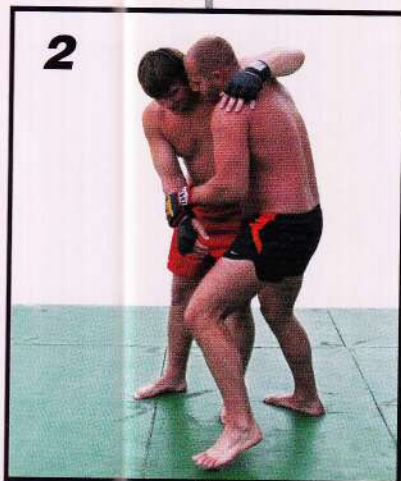


## SHOULDER BUMP TO GUT-WRENCH BACK TRIP

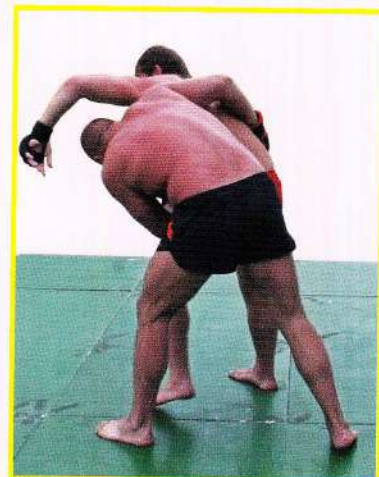
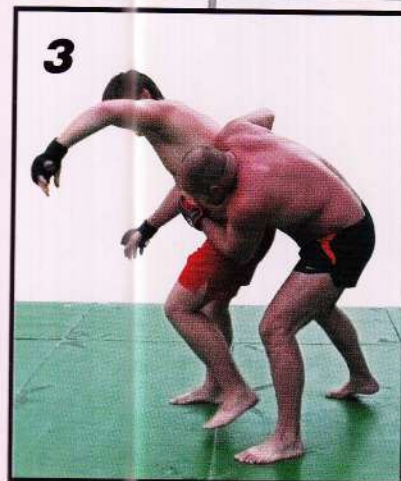
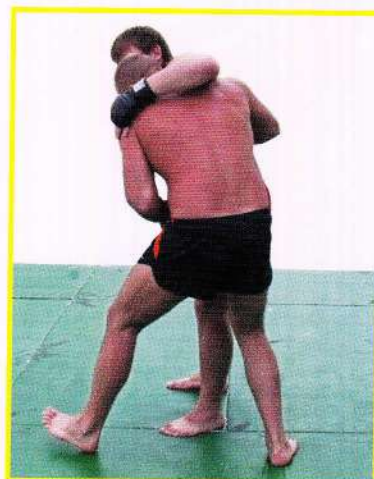
In the previous sequence I secured a dominant control position by placing my head on the same side of my opponent's body as my overhook and establishing a tight whizzer. In this sequence I make a very similar transition, but instead of positioning my head on the same side of my opponent's body as my overhook, I position it on the same side as my underhook. This allows me to reach around my opponent's back and latch on to his far hip. At the same time, I grab his far wrist. Achieving this position makes it fairly easy to duck my head underneath his near arm, bump him forward, circle behind him, and establish a body lock. Once I have the body lock secure, I can haul him to the mat using a backward trip, secure a dominant position, and batter him with strikes. This technique also comes in very handy when your opponent wraps an arm around your head, secures a headlock, and attempts to execute a throw. Instead of letting him accomplish his goal, you shrug his arm off your head utilizing this technique and take his back. It is important to note that this particular move works best late in the fight when both you and your opponent are covered in sweat.



I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. Notice how I've positioned my head on the same side as my underhook, as well as latched on to his far hip with my right hand. Assuming this positioning will allow me to duck my head underneath his near arm and take his back.



I step my left foot forward and drive my right shoulder into Kirill's armpit.



In addition to shrugging Kirill's left arm off my head, my actions force him to step forward. Immediately I duck my head underneath his left arm, release my grip on his right wrist, and circle my body toward his back. It is important to notice that I keep my head tight to his body for control. This will also prevent him from hitting me with a backward elbow.

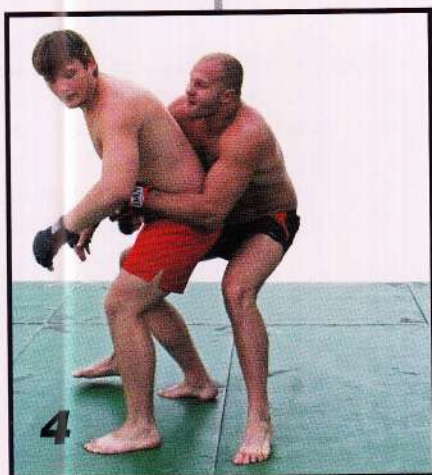


**KEY CONCEPTS**

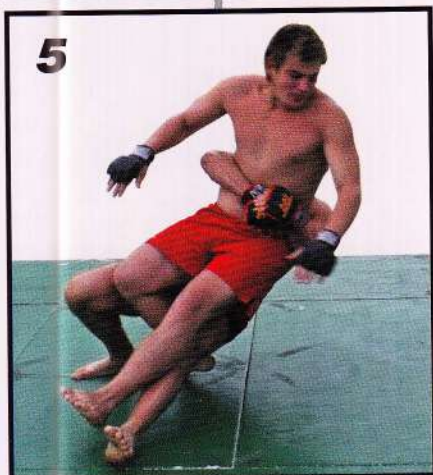
\*To secure dominant control, place your head on the same side of your opponent's body as your underhook.

\*To establish a tight body lock, wrap your arms around your opponent's waist, clasp your hands together, and dig your grip into his abdomen.

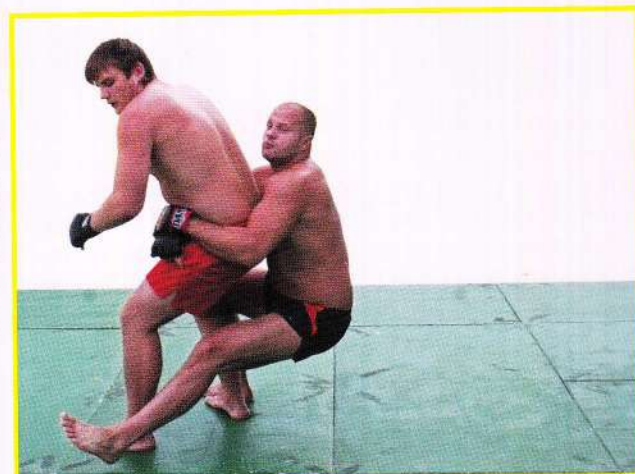
\*When you drop back for the takedown, land on your side and then roll up to your knees to secure top control.



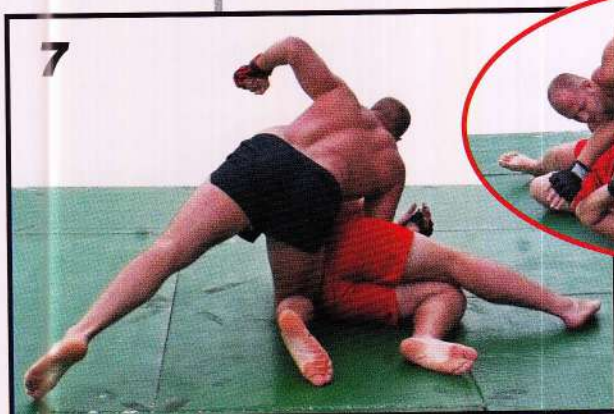
As I step my right foot to the outside of Kirill's right foot and circle around behind him, I secure a tight body lock by wrapping my arms around his waist, gripping my hands together just below his belly button, and sucking my arms inward.



Keeping my body lock tight, I circle my body toward Kirill's left side and lean my weight back. As I fall toward my left side, I post my left foot behind Kirill's left foot to prevent him from maintaining his balance by stepping back.



As Kirill lands hard on his left side, I use the momentum of the throw to roll over on top of him and come up onto my knees.



Centering my weight over the top of Kirill, I drive my right knee into his lower back and draw my left hand back to strike.

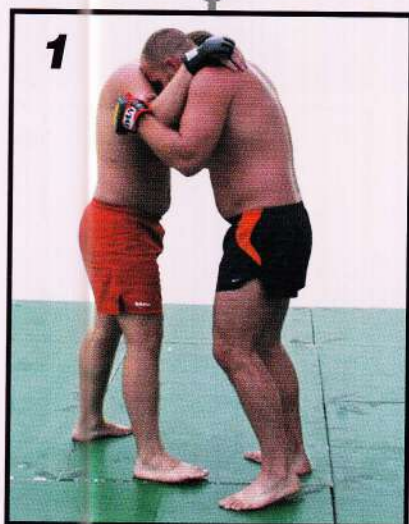




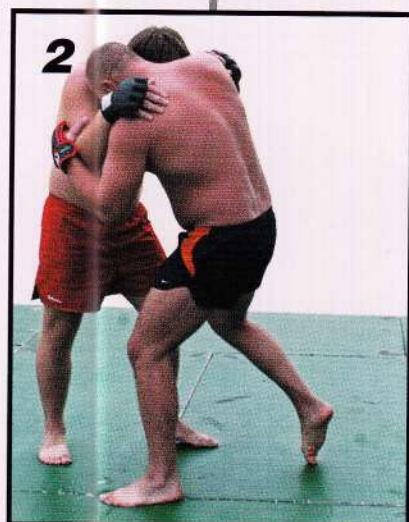
## KNEE BLOCK

The clinch is a constant back-and-forth battle to secure some type of dominant control. If you establish an underhook, the chances are your opponent will secure an underhook on the opposite side to prevent you from getting a body lock. As a result, both of you end up with over-under control, which is a neutral position. The same thing happens with a collar tie. The instant you wrap a hand around the back of your opponent's head, the chances are he will wrap his hand around the back of your neck on the opposite side to prevent you from getting the Muay Thai clinch, again resulting in a neutral position. In previous techniques I demonstrated how to get the upper hand when in the neutral over-under tie-up position, and in this sequence I demonstrate how to do the same when in the neutral collar tie position by using your control and movement to off-balance your opponent. The nice part about having a collar tie is that not only can you use your control to push and pull on your opponent, but you also have your elbow dug into the middle of his chest, which prevents him from closing the distance and securing a body lock. There are many techniques that I'll use to turn the tide of battle, but perhaps my favorite one to employ from the neutral collar tie position is the knee block.

To disrupt my opponent's balance and set up the knee block, I'll drive him backward by stepping forward. The majority of the time my opponent will counter my movement by driving back into me. When he does this, I'll relax my grips and allow him to step forward. Next, I'll step deep between his legs, drive my chest into his chest, and hook the leg he brought forward with my free arm. To score the takedown, I'll pull his leg off the mat and then drive his body toward his missing leg using my collar tie. By simply removing one of my opponent's legs from the mat and then shifting all of his weight to that same side, he topples effortlessly over. The more sideways force you apply with your collar tie, the harder he will land. Just like a lot of the takedowns I demonstrate in this section, the nice part about the knee block is that you're left standing over your downed opponent, which allows you to immediately get busy with ground and pound. The most important part of this technique is timing—the instant your opponent steps forward, you want to snatch his leg up and twist. When done correctly, it is a very powerful technique. I actually caught Mirko CroCop with this technique when we fought in pride. I went for an inside leg trip first, and he countered by coming down heavy on his inside leg. His actions might have blocked my first attack, but they set me up perfectly to transition right into the knee block.



**1** I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. I've secured a right collar tie and left triceps grip, and he has secured a right collar tie and left triceps grip. To get the upper hand in this neutral position, I will execute the knee block takedown.

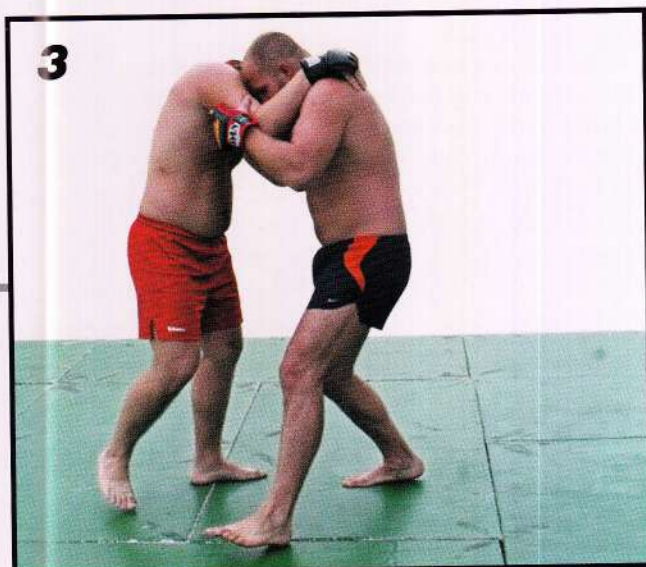


**2** To set up the takedown, I force Kirill off balance by driving off my right foot, stepping my left foot forward, and pushing his body backward using my right collar tie. To maintain his balance, Kirill steps his right foot back.

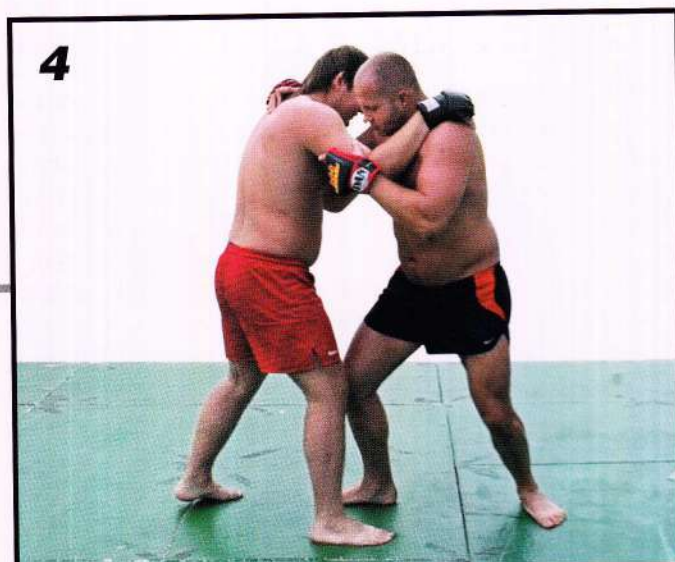
### KEY CONCEPTS

- \*To set up the takedown, use your collar tie to move your opponent's body and throw him off balance.
- \*When you snatch up your opponent's leg, use your collar tie to steer his body toward his missing leg.
- \*Assuming a wide base will allow you to remain standing as you drive forward and pull your opponent's leg off the mat.
- \*The instant your opponent hits the mat, either transition into a leg lock, begin your ground and pound, or pass his guard and assume a dominant top position.

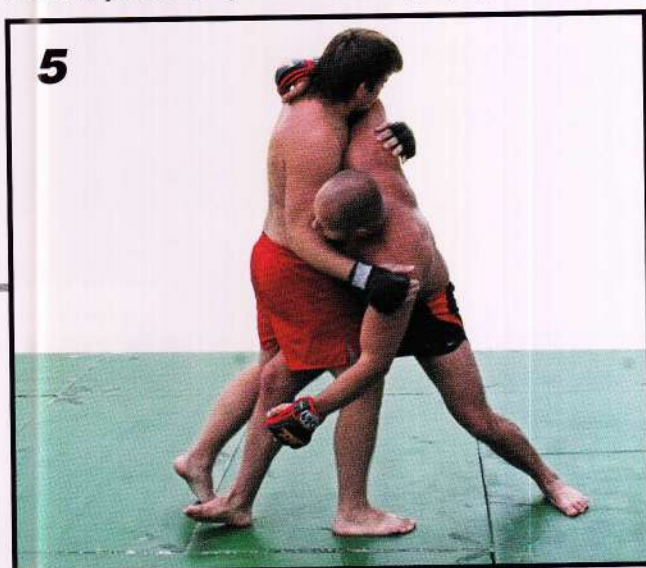




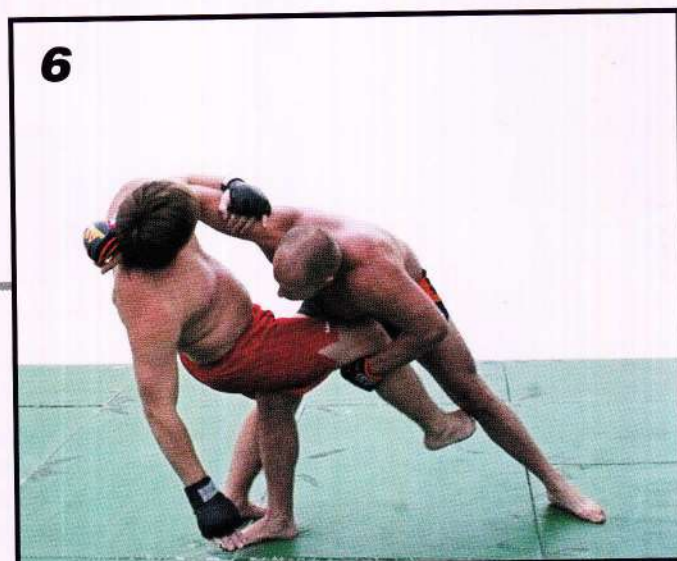
**3** Kirill counters my initial movement by pushing back into me and stepping his right foot forward. As he does this, I step back and pull his body toward me using my right collar tie.



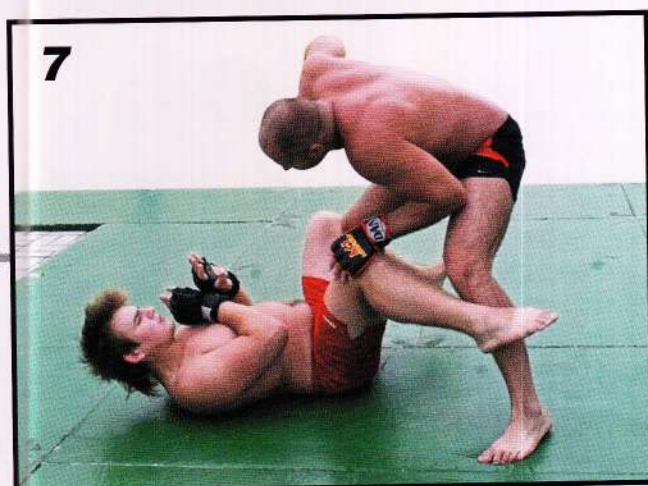
**4** Kirill takes a heavy step forward with his right foot.



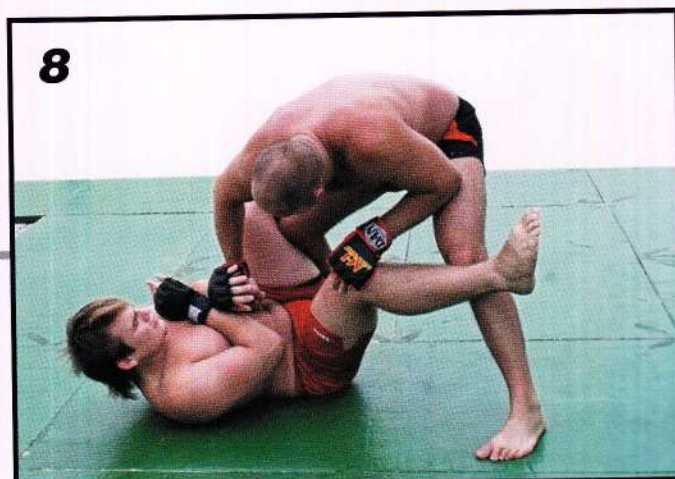
**5** As Kirill's right foot touches down, I lower my elevation, step my right leg deep between his legs, slam my chest into his body, hook my right arm around the left side of his neck, and reach my left arm around the outside of his right leg.



**6** I hook my left hand around the back of Kirill's right knee. Next, I pull his right leg toward my crotch using my left hand, push his upper body toward his right side using my right arm, and twist my body in a counterclockwise direction.



**7** As Kirill slams down to the mat, I cock my right hand back and prepare to unleash a ground and pound assault.

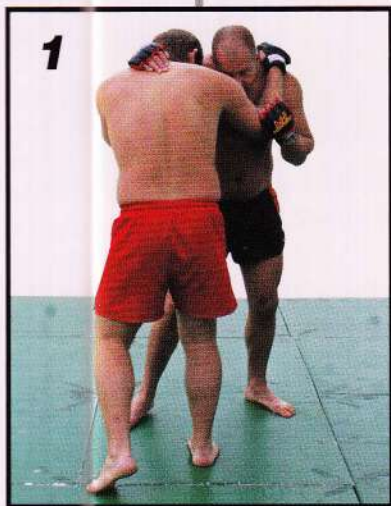


**8** I throw a right hook to Kirill's abdomen.

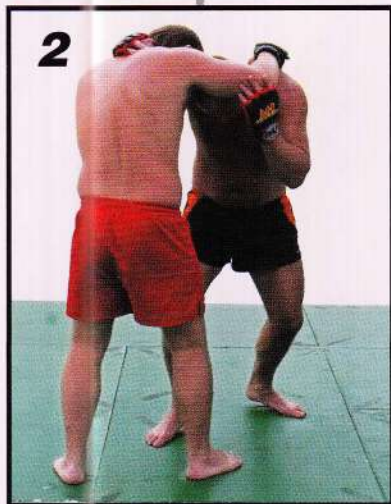


## LEG SCOOP TO INSIDE LEG TRIP

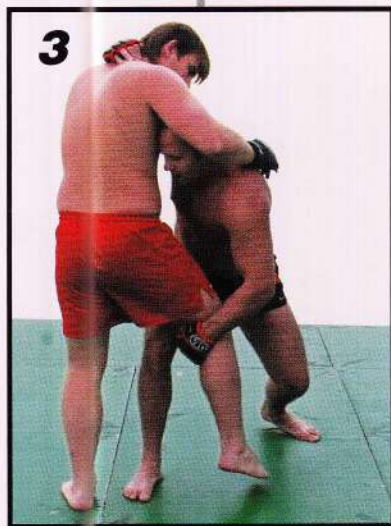
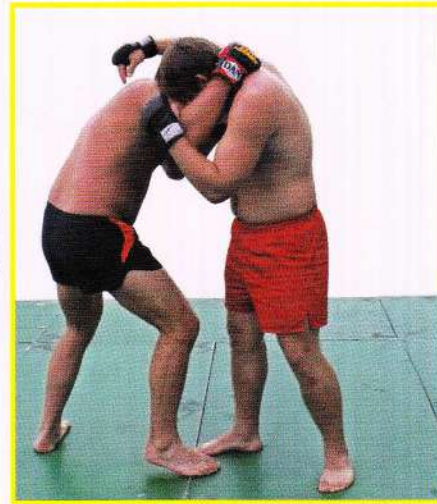
The single-leg to inside trip is very similar to the previous technique. Just as with the knee block, I begin with a collar tie and triceps grip, step deep between my opponent's legs, hook my arm around his near knee, pull his leg off the mat, and then slam him to his back by twisting my body and applying circular pressure with my collar tie. The main difference is that instead of forcing his weight toward the side of his missing leg and letting gravity do the trick, I step deeper between his legs and execute a trip. It's an excellent technique to utilize when your opponent counters the knee block by hopping on his grounded leg to maintain his balance. Just as with the previous technique, it will leave you standing over your opponent, which allows you to initiate a ground and pound assault, attack one of his elevated legs with a submission, or pass his guard into a dominant position.



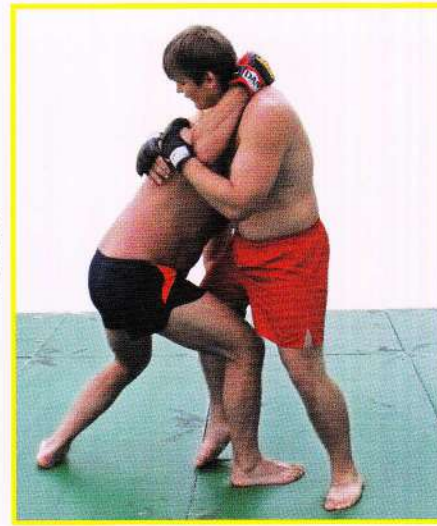
I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. I have a right collar tie and a left triceps grip, and he has a right collar tie and a left triceps grip.



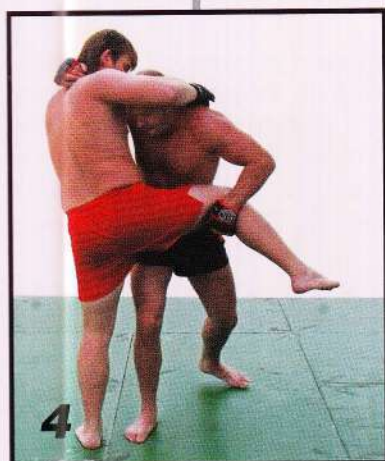
In order to penetrate in for the takedown, I need to duck my head underneath Kirill's right collar tie. To begin this process, I grip his right elbow with my left hand and force his right arm upward.



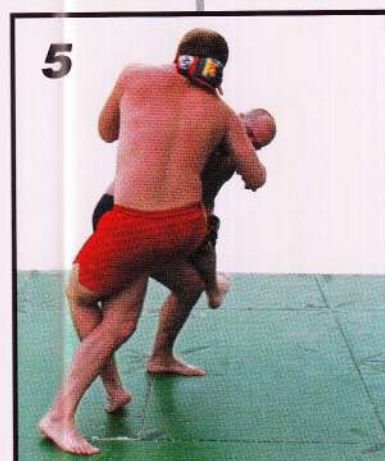
Having forced Kirill's right arm upward using my left grip on his elbow, I drop my elevation, duck my head underneath his right arm, and wrap my left arm around the back of his right knee.



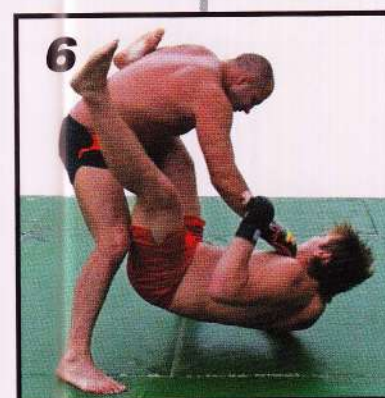
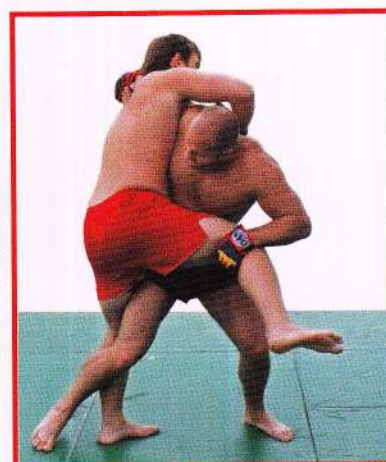




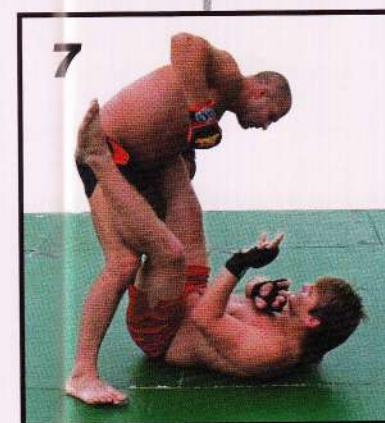
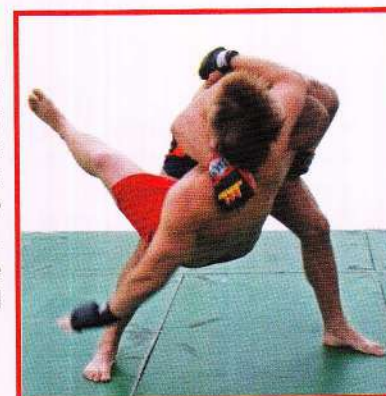
I straighten my posture, hook my left hand around the back of Kirill's right knee, and hoist his leg off the mat.



As I straighten my posture, I draw Kirill's right leg into my body using my left hand and step my right leg behind his left leg.



Keeping Kirill's right leg tight to my side, I twist my body in a counterclockwise direction and use my right collar tie to push his upper body toward his right side. With these actions, he trips over my right leg and plummets toward the mat.



As Kirill lands hard on his back, I remain standing. Notice how I'm in a perfect position to attack one of his legs with a submission, pass his guard, or unleash with ground and pound. In this particular case I draw my right hand back to throw a punch to his body.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

\*To execute the duck-under technique, elevate your opponent's arm using your triceps tie, drop your elevation, and duck your head underneath his arm.

\*This technique can be utilized as an initial attack or when your opponent counters the knee block by hopping on his grounded leg and maintaining his balance.

\*Once you scoop your opponent's leg off the mat, step to the inside of his grounded leg, twist your body, and drive your opponent in the direction of his missing leg using your collar tie.

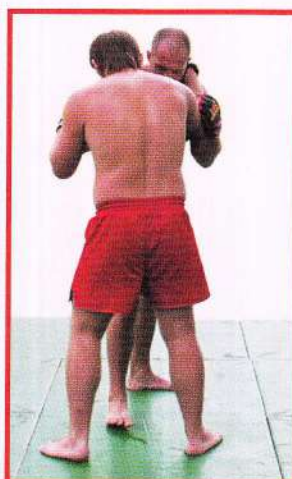


## CROSS-BODY INSIDE LEG TRIP

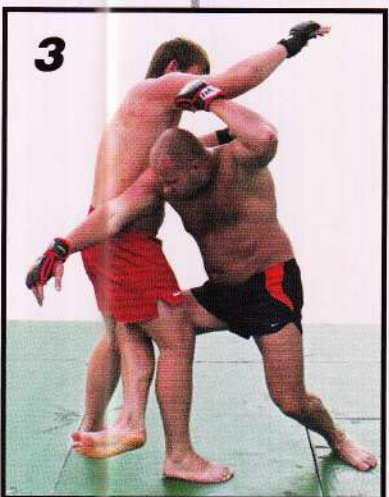
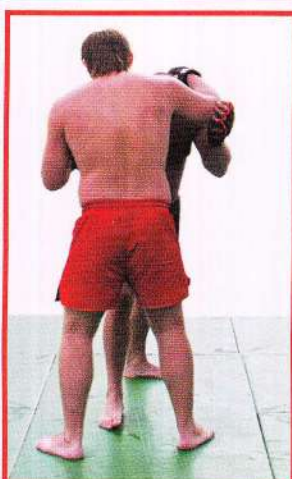
This is another takedown that I utilize when I'm in the neutral collar tie position. Just as with the previous technique, I employ a duck-under to counter my opponent's collar tie, but instead of executing the inside trip from the standing position, I haul my opponent to the mat by collapsing my weight over his trapped leg. As my opponent crashes to his back, I'll land in his half guard and either attack his legs with a submission or begin striking at his body and head. In order to be successful with this technique it is important that you execute each of the steps in one fluid motion and with speed. If you're slow, your opponent will certainly counter. Once you land in the half guard, it is also important that you square your hips up with your opponent's hips to prevent him from taking your back.



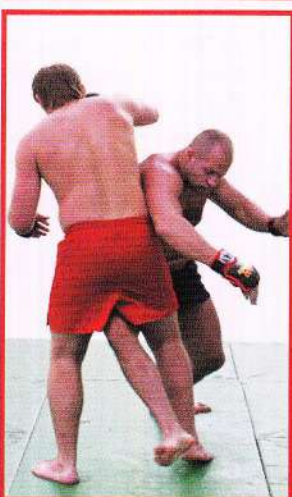
I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. I have a right collar tie and a left triceps grip, and he has a right collar tie and left triceps grip.



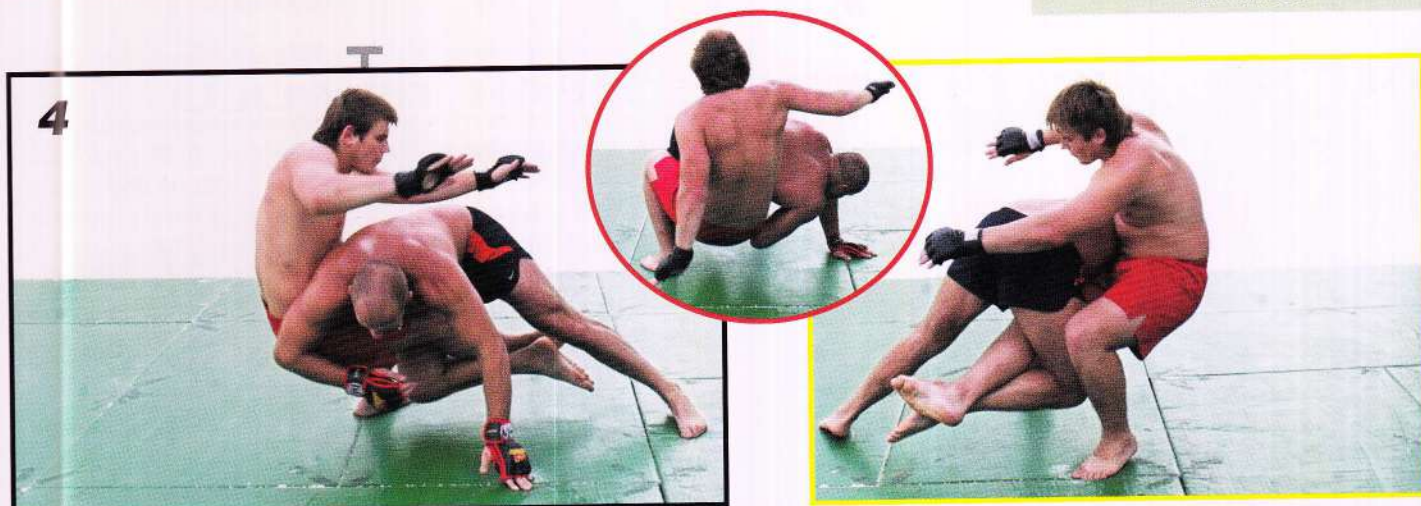
In order to penetrate in for the takedown, I need to duck my head underneath Kirill's right collar tie. To begin this process, I grip his right elbow with my left hand and reach my right hand toward the right side of his body.



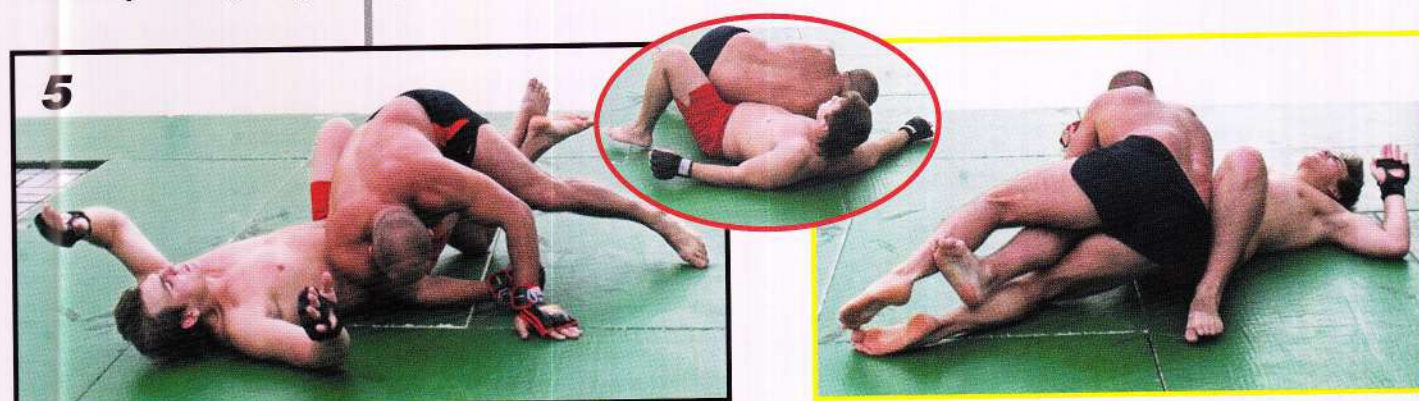
I lift Kirill's right elbow using my left hand. At the same time, I drop my elevation, duck my head underneath his right arm, reach my right arm to the left side of his body, drive off my left foot, and hook my right leg around the back of his right leg.



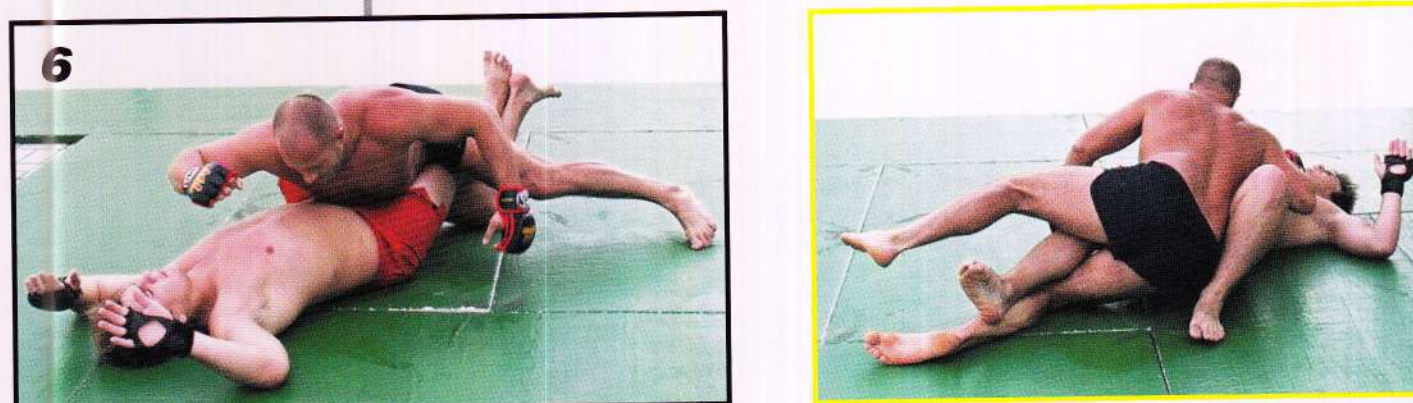




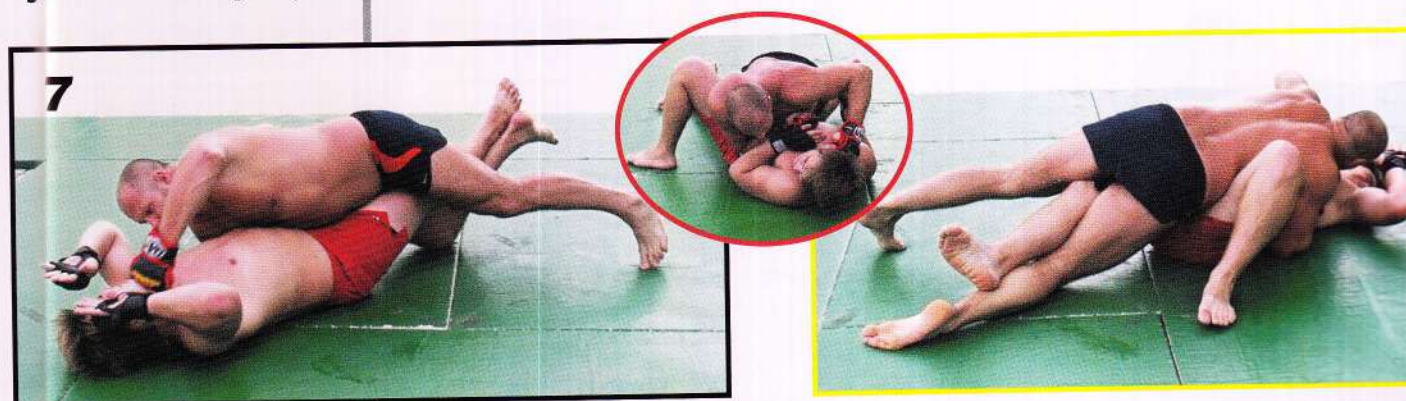
**4** In one fluid motion, I hook my right leg around the back of Kirill's right leg, scoop my right heel toward my butt, and collapse my chest over the top of his right thigh and hip.



**5** Due to the fluidity of my actions, Kirill falls to his back and I land in his half guard.



**6** The instant I land, I immediately square my hips and shoulders in relation to Kirill's hips and shoulders. Once accomplished, I cock my right hand back to begin a ground and pound assault.

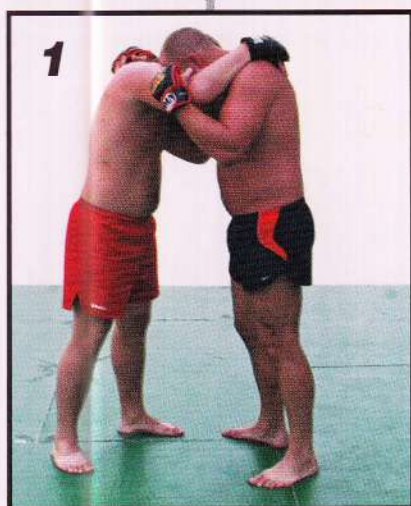


**7** Rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I throw a heavy left hand to Kirill's face.

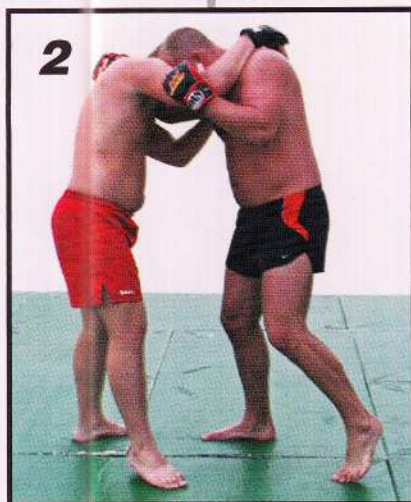


## OUTSIDE FOOT SWEEP (COLLAR TIE PULL)

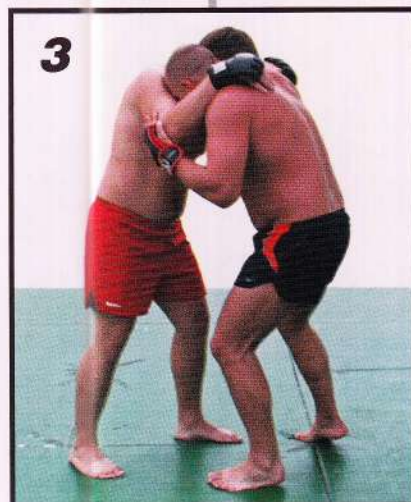
The outside foot sweep is a crafty takedown that works wonderfully from the neutral collar tie position. In this particular sequence, I force my opponent's upper body in a clockwise direction by pulling on his head with my collar tie and pushing against his side using my opposite hand. In order to maintain his balance, he must step his left foot in the direction his body is turning, but I prevent him from doing that by chopping my right foot into his left instep. When done with the proper timing, your opponent will go flying through the air. Even if he blocks the sweep, his balance and position will still be off, which allows you to transition into another takedown or launch a striking combination. In the next sequence, I demonstrate how to execute this same technique in the opposite direction.



I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. Both of us have a right collar tie.



In order to generate momentum for the foot sweep, I need to get Kirill moving forward. To begin this process, I take a step back with my left foot.



The instant my left foot comes down on the mat, I pull on the back of Kirill's head using my right collar tie, pivot on my left foot, and rotate my body in a clockwise direction. In order to maintain his balance, Kirill steps his left foot forward.

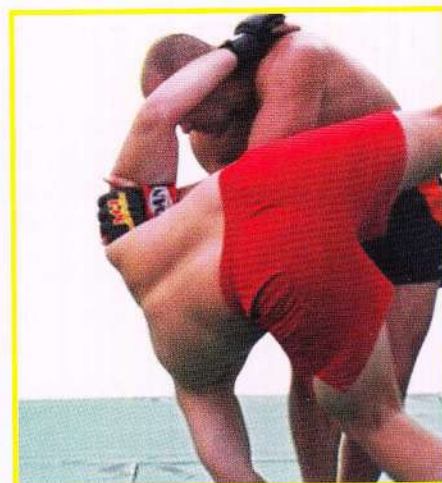
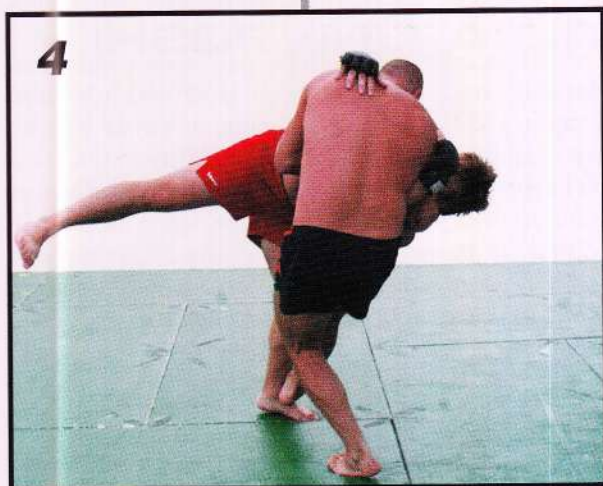


### KEY CONCEPTS

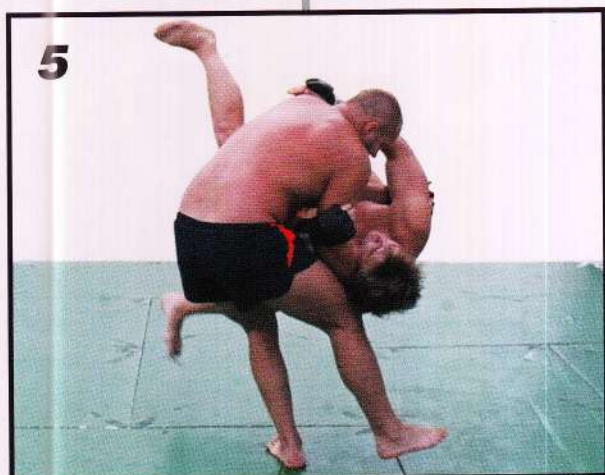
\*To set up the foot sweep, pull your opponent forward using your right collar tie. If his body moves toward your right side, utilize this technique. If his body moves toward your left side, utilize the next technique in this section.

\*Once you've launched your opponent into the air, immediately regain your base by planting your foot on the mat behind you.

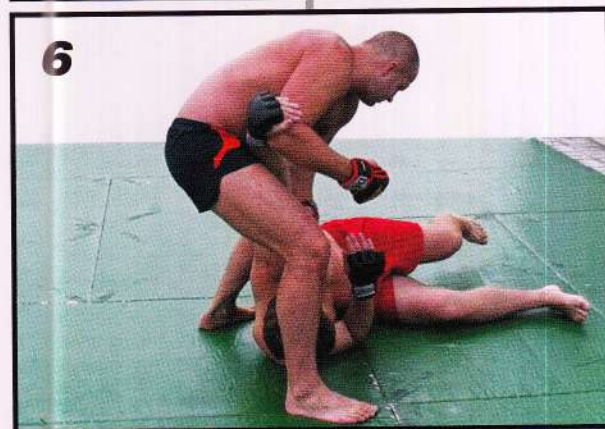




I continue to pull on Kirill's head with my right collar tie and turn my body in a clockwise direction. At the same time, I slide my left hand up to his right armpit and push his upper body toward my right side. My actions thrust Kirill off balance and loads his weight onto his left leg. To prevent him from regaining his balance by hopping on his left foot, I slam my right foot into his left instep. Since I'm moving my upper body in one direction and my lower body in another, I've centered my hips directly over my left foot in order to maintain my balance.



Kirill gets tossed through the air.



As Kirill lands on his side, I drop my right foot to the mat and cock my right hand back.



Rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I land a devastating right hook to Kirill's solar plexus.

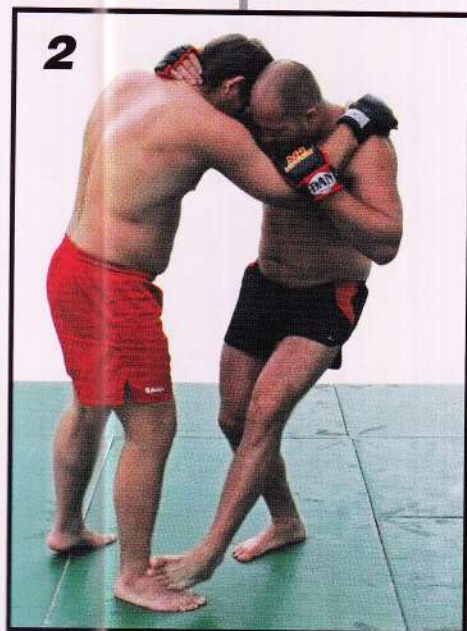
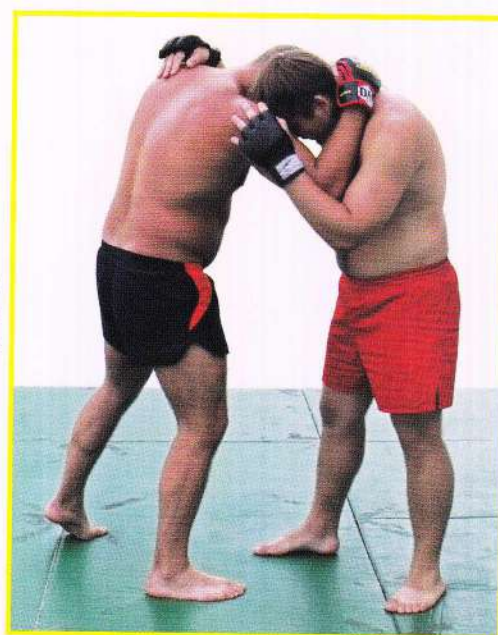


## OUTSIDE FOOT SWEEP 2 (COLLAR TIE PUSH)

By simply pulling on your opponent's head from the neutral collar tie position, you can disrupt his balance and force him to move into you. Although having that power is always nice, your opponent still has several options as far as how he moves forward. He could come straight at you or direct his energy to one side or the other. Having the ability to read that direction is extremely important because it dictates what techniques you have at your disposal. The previous technique is an excellent option for when your opponent directs his forward momentum toward your right side. To execute the sweep, you pull on his head with your right collar tie, drive your opposite hand into his armpit, and turn his body in a clockwise direction, which is the direction his energy was originally heading. Not having to reverse the direction of his momentum, executing the sweep is quite effortless. However, if your opponent steps his rear foot forward and directs his energy toward your left side, utilizing the previous sweep is not your best option because you have to alter his course in order for the sweep to work. In such a scenario, you'll want to sweep him in the opposite direction using this technique. It shares all the principles of the previous one, except now you want to turn his body like a wheel in a counterclockwise direction. This is managed by pushing on his head with your collar tie and pulling on his triceps with your opposite hand. Before your opponent can step forward and reacquire his balance, you chop his leg out from underneath him just as before, only now you use your left foot instead of your right. Understanding which direction to sweep your opponent requires excellent timing and sensitivity, and the only way to acquire them is to spend a lot of time drilling and sparring in the gym.



I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. In order to generate momentum for the foot sweep, I pull on his head using my right collar tie.

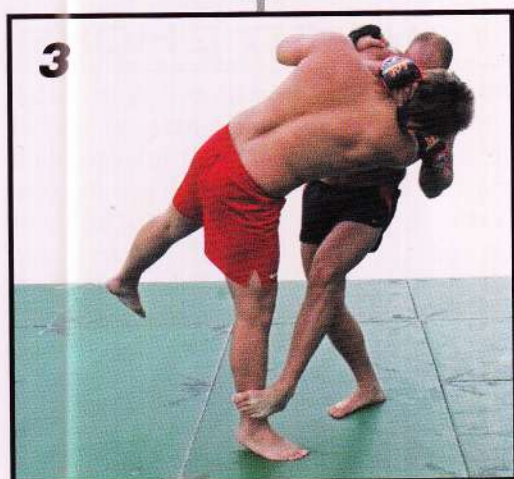


As I pull on Kirill's head, he drives his body toward my left side. In order to use his momentum to my advantage, I rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction, push his upper body toward my left side using my right collar tie, and pull on his right arm using my left hand. At the same time, I sweep my left foot toward his right instep.

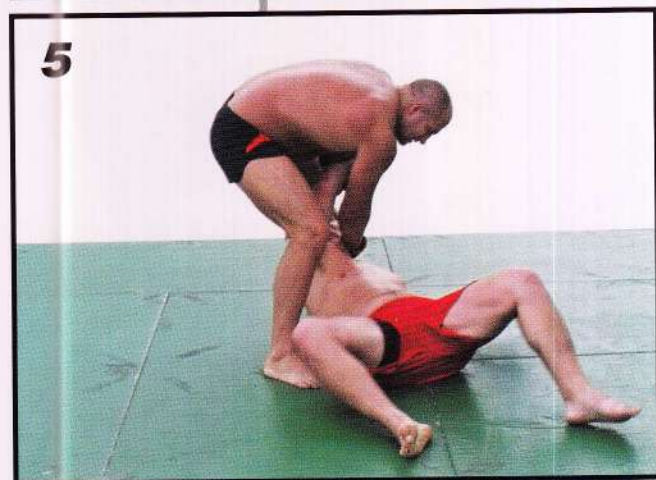
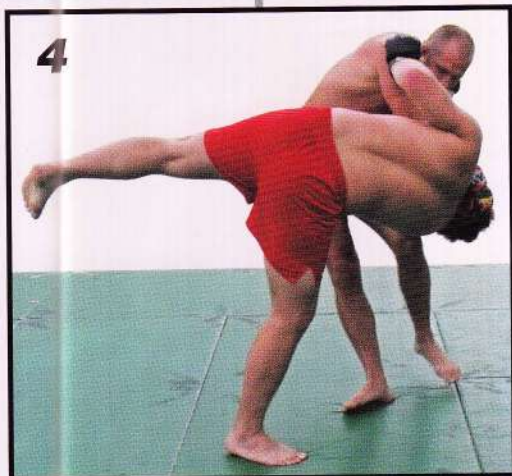
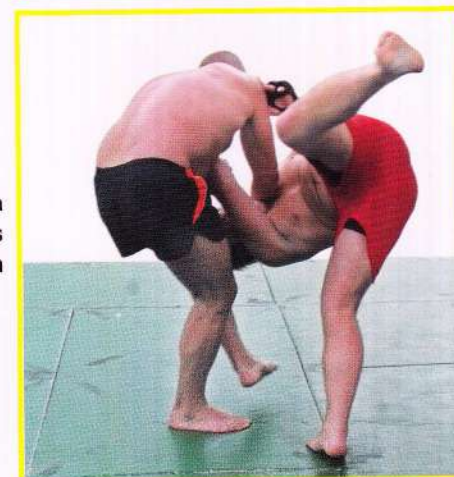
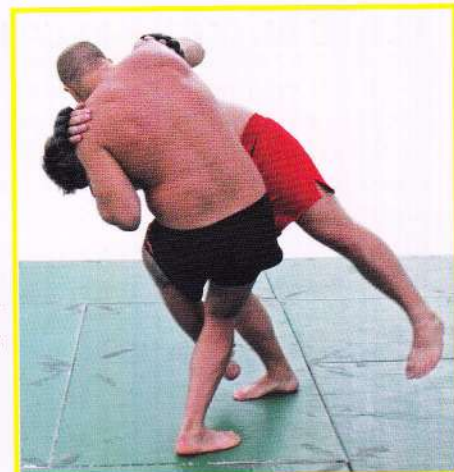
### KEY CONCEPTS

\*To set up the foot sweep, pull your opponent forward using your right collar tie. If his body moves toward your right side, utilize the previous technique. If his body moves toward your left side, utilize this technique.

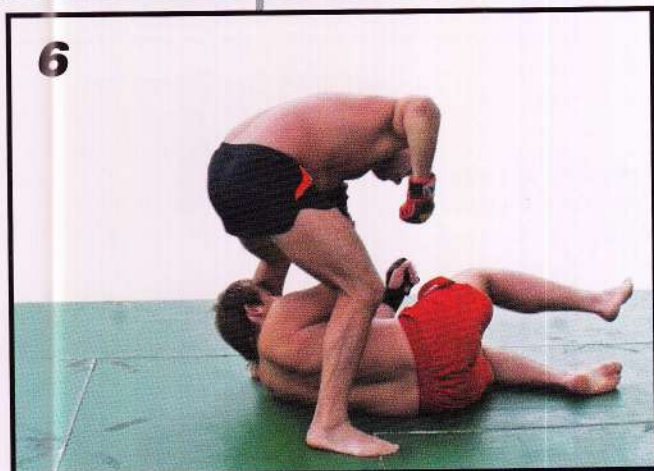




Due to my actions, Kirill is thrust off balance. To prevent him from regaining his balance by hopping on his right foot, I slam my left foot into his right instep.



As Kirill gets slammed, I plant my left foot on the mat.

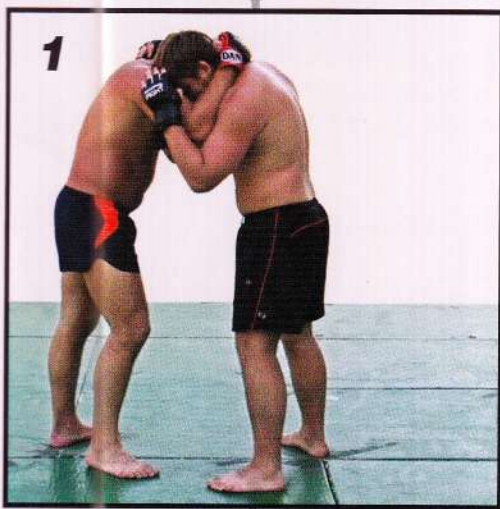


With Kirill stunned from the throw, I cock my right arm back to unleash a ground and pound assault.

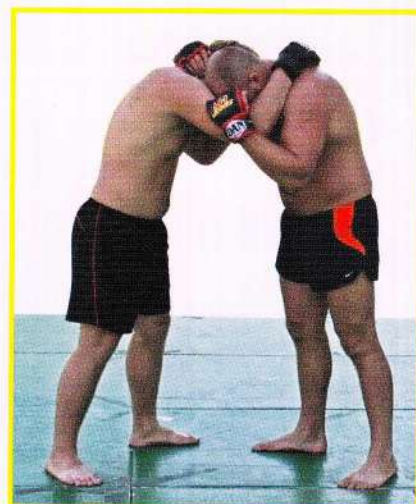


## KNEE TO SNAP DOWN TO REAR NAKED CHOKE

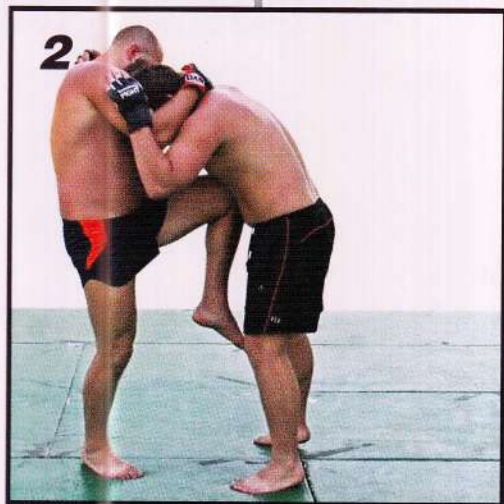
A lot of times when you're tied up in the clinch and land a hard knee to your opponent's body, he will drop down to his knees in an attempt to capture your legs and execute a takedown. To prevent him from accomplishing his goal, sprawl your legs back and drive your stomach down into his shoulders. With all your weight trapping him in the all-fours position beneath you, his forward momentum will be directed into the mat instead of toward your legs. As long as you maintain the downward pressure into his shoulders, you have an opportunity to spin around to his back, hook your feet to the inside of his legs, and apply a rear naked choke. This technique can also be utilized when you secure a dominant clinch and force your opponent down to all fours by lowering his head or when your opponent willingly drops his elevation from the clinch to execute a takedown. The most important part of this technique is speed. The instant your opponent drops and drives forward for your legs, execute a perfect sprawl and drop your weight down on top of him.



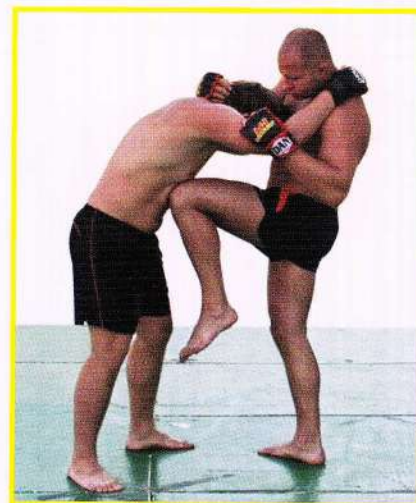
I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. I have a right collar tie and my left hand is hooked over his upper right forearm.



I pull Kirill's head down using my right arm and throw a left knee to his solar plexus.



Having kned Kirill in the midsection, I plant my left foot on the mat and continue to pull his head toward the mat using both of my hands.



### KEY CONCEPTS

\*This technique can be utilized in two different scenarios—when your opponent drops to his knees to shoot in for a takedown or when you force him down into the all-fours position by throwing a knee at his midsection and snapping his head down.

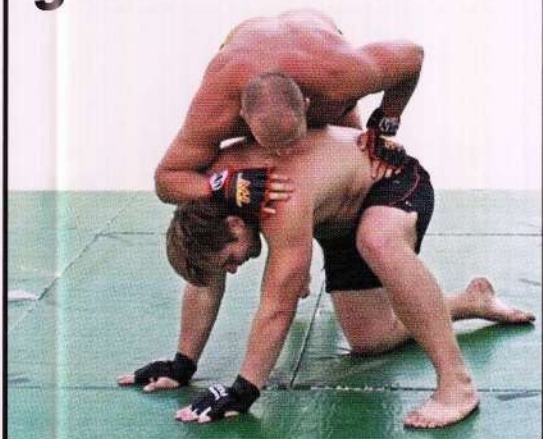


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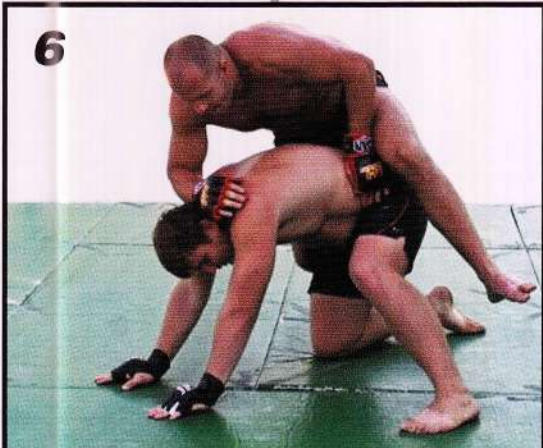
The impact of the knee strike along with the downward pressure on his head drops Kirill into the all-fours position. As he comes down, I sprawl my hips and legs back and drive my chest into his upper back. It is important to drive all of your weight down into your opponent instead of just applying slight pressure. This will prevent him from standing up or executing a takedown by driving forward and capturing one of your legs.

5



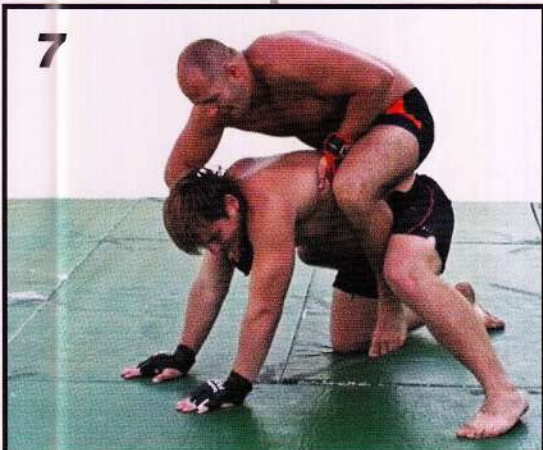
With Kirill pinned in the all-fours position, I keep my weight on his back and begin spinning around his right side toward his back.

6

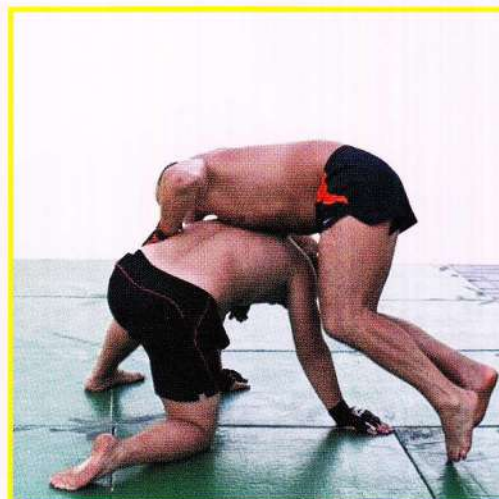


As I spin around Kirill's right side, I plant my right foot on the mat and throw my left leg over the top of his back.

7

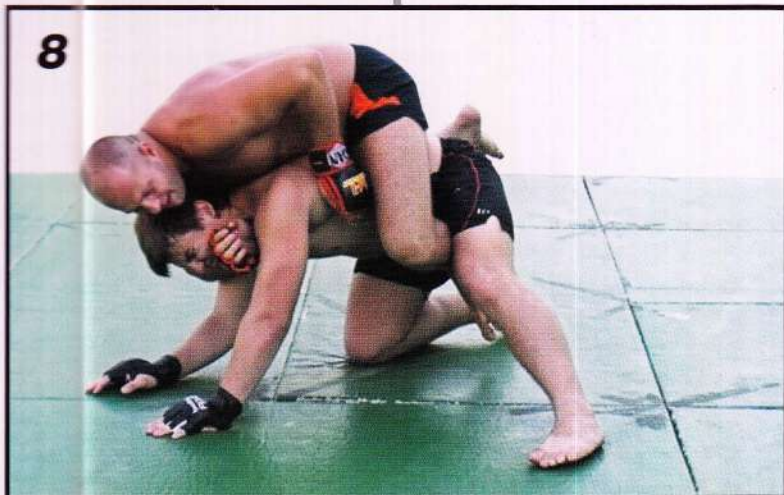


I hook my left leg around the inside of Kirill's left thigh. Next, I slide my right arm around the right side of his head and underneath his chin. To expose his neck, I lift his head using the bony part of my right forearm.



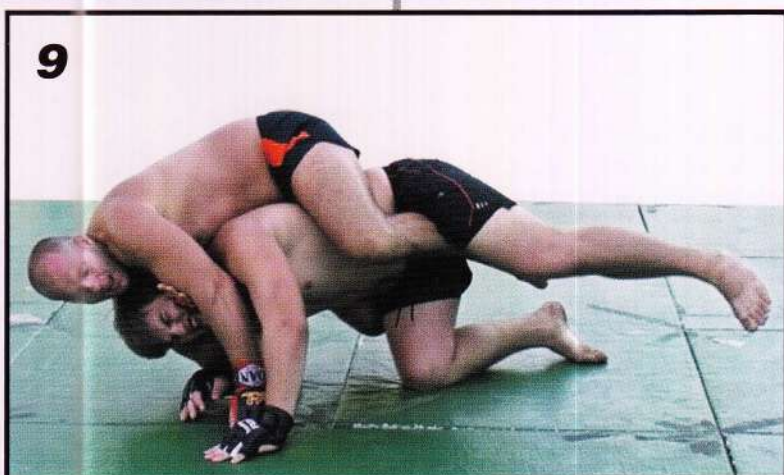


8



Keeping my left leg hooked tight around the inside of Kirill's left leg, I wrap my right arm around his neck and start sinking in the rear naked choke.

9



I drop my weight onto Kirill's back, forcing him to roll onto his right shoulder. As he falls, I grab my left bicep with my right hand.

10



As Kirill comes onto his right side, I sink my right arm even deeper into his neck and I draw my left arm toward my body.

11

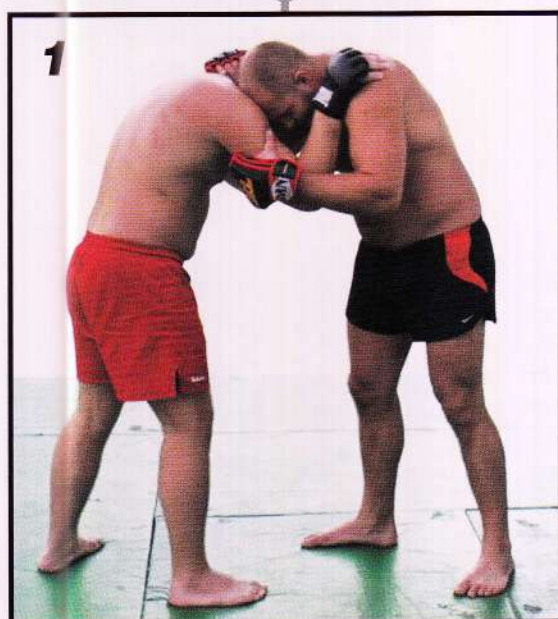


I pull Kirill on top of me and hook my right leg around the front of his right thigh. To finish the choke, I place my left hand on top of his head and squeeze my arms together with all my might.

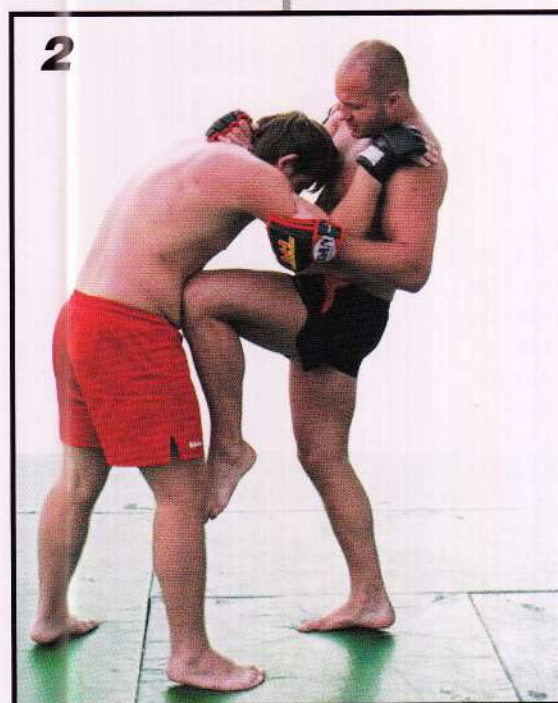


## GUILLOTINE TO PUNCHING COMBO

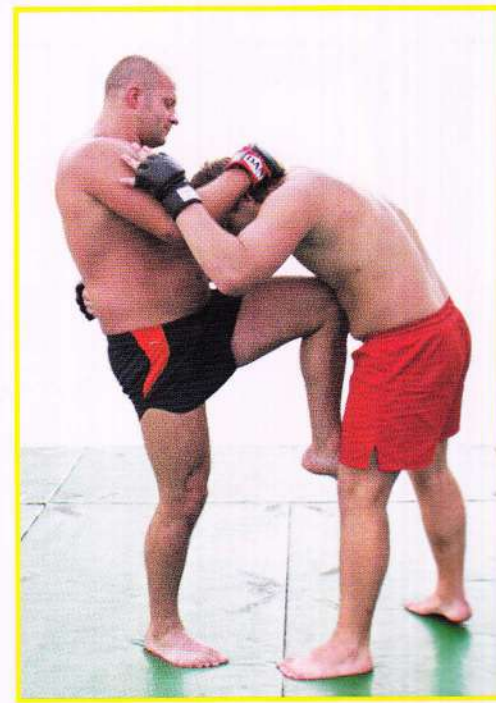
Early in my career when I fought Chris Haseman in the Japanese MMA fighting organization RINGS, I utilized a technique very similar to the one demonstrated below. In this sequence, I throw a knee from the neutral collar tie position, force my opponent's head down, and then lock in a guillotine choke. Sometimes it's possible to finish your opponent with the choke from the standing position, but on occasion he will manage to straighten his posture and pull his head free, just like Haseman did when we fought. However, as your opponent's head pops out from underneath your armpit, it will usually snap back independently from his arms, giving you an opportunity to land a series of punches to his unprotected face. That is exactly what I did with Haseman, and I connected with enough hard punches to end the fight. It is important to note that although I begin this sequence from the neutral collar tie position, there are many ways to end up in this scenario. For example, you could sprawl your legs back to block a takedown, wrap an arm around your opponent's neck, and then stand up in an attempt to finish him with the guillotine. You could also end up with the standing guillotine off a scramble, which is what happened in the Haseman fight. No matter how you get to the standing guillotine, the trick is throwing punches the instant your opponent manages to free his head. If you are slow to react, he will have an opportunity to elevate his guard, putting you back at square one.



I'm tied up with Kirill in the clinch. I have a right collar tie and my left hand is hooked over his upper right forearm.



I throw a left knee to Kirill's midsection.

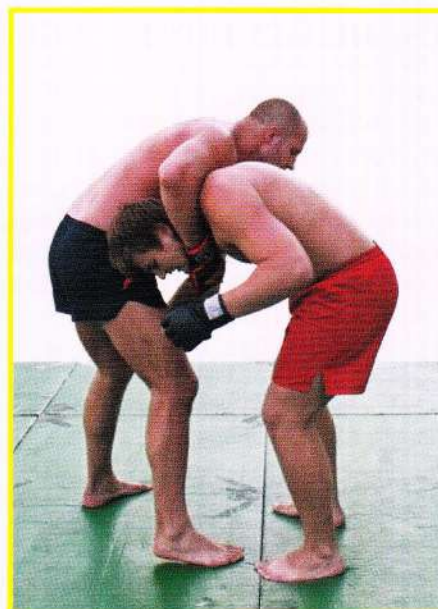




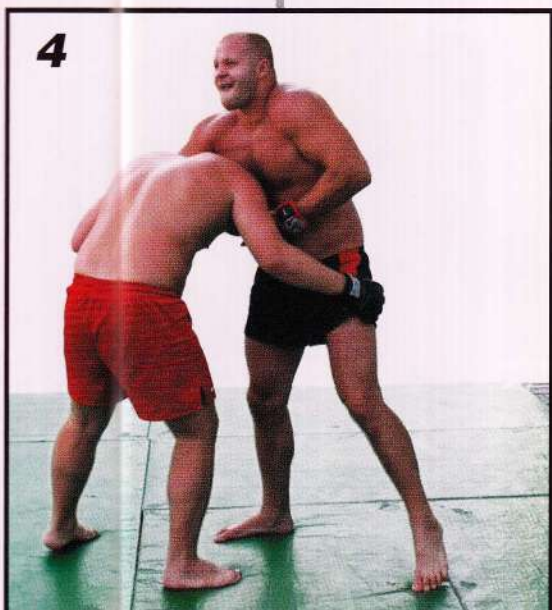
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Immediately after landing the knee, I drop my left foot to the mat, pull Kirill's head down using my arms, and position my right shoulder over his upper back. At the same time, I wedge my right hand underneath his chin.



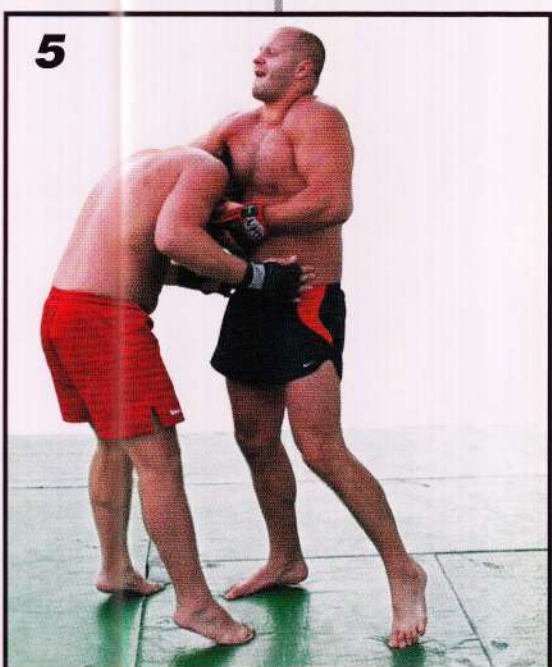
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I wrap my right arm around Kirill's neck, move my left hand to the front of his right arm, and then grip my hands together.



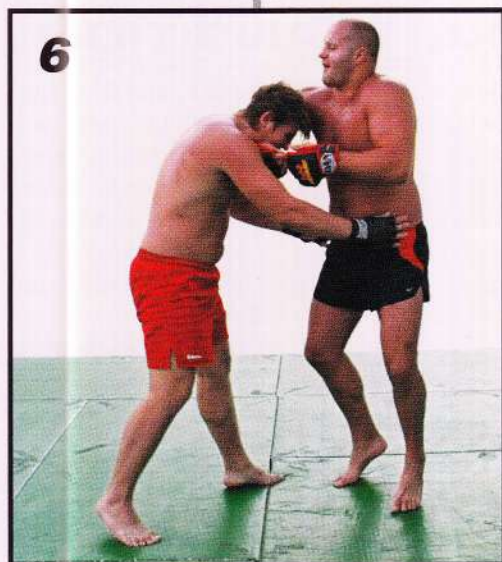
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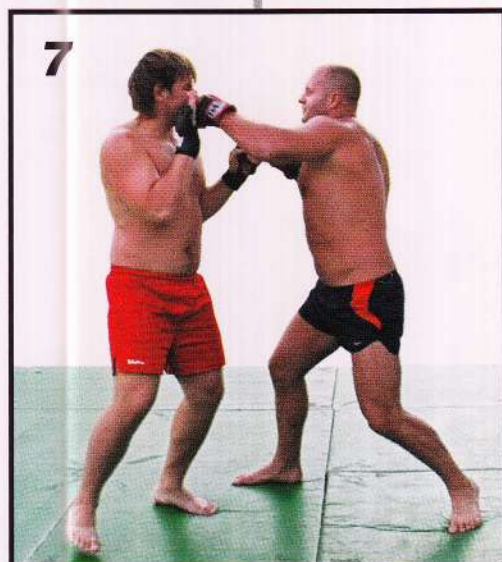
Having secured the guillotine position, I apply the choke by thrusting my hips forward, arching my back, and driving my right forearm upward into Kirill's throat. It is quite possible to finish your opponent with the guillotine from the standing position, but if he should manage to free his head, immediately follow up with a striking combination.



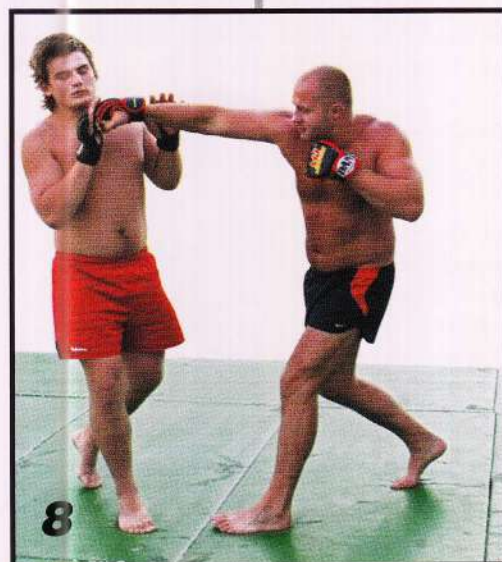
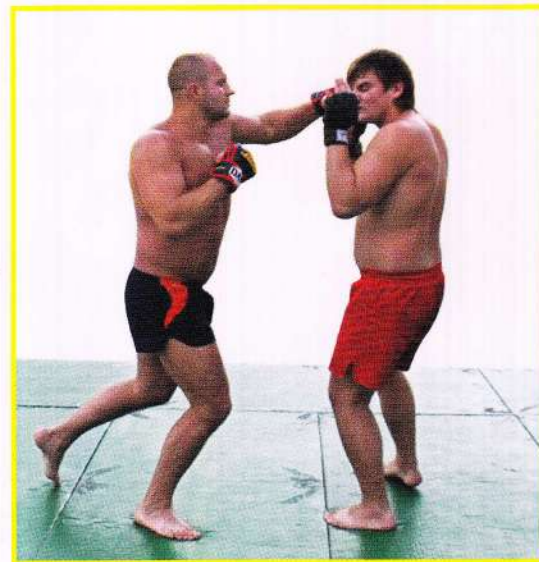




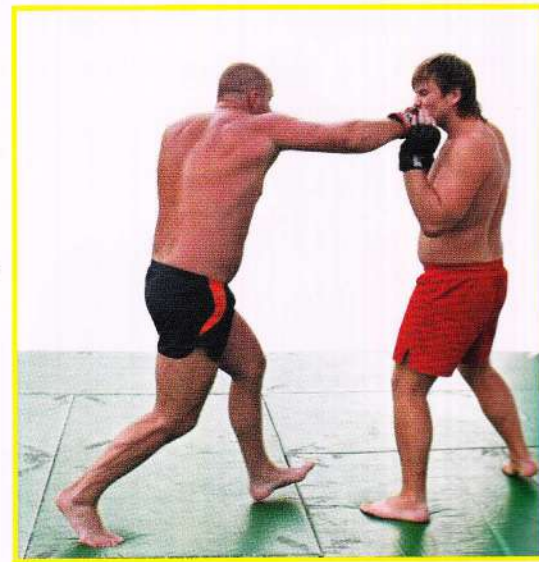
Kirill postures up and escapes the guillotine. To use his escape against him, I release my grip on his head and use my right forearm to force his head upward, exposing his face.



Before Kirill can raise his guard, I throw a left hook at his face.



I step my left foot forward and follow up with a right cross.



#### KEY CONCEPTS

- \* Attempt to finish your opponent with the guillotine choke, but if his head should pop free, use his compromised position to throw strikes.
- \* Don't hesitate between releasing the guillotine choke and throwing strikes.

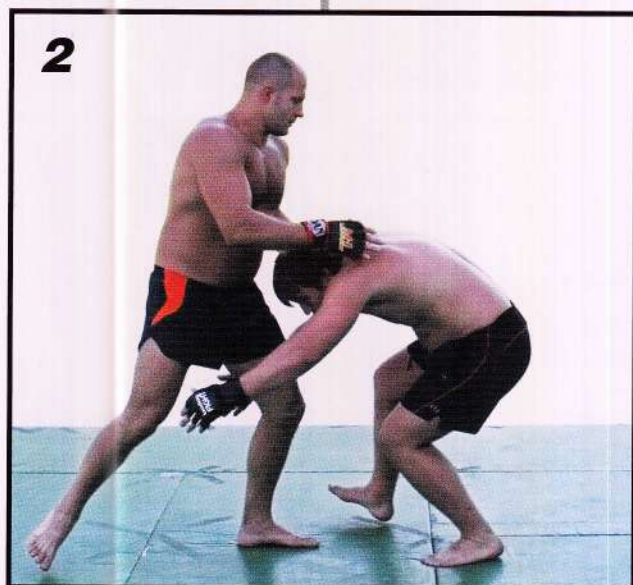


## SPRAWL TO REAR NAKED CHOKE TRANSITION

Earlier I demonstrated how to force your opponent down to the all-fours position, sprawl your legs back, and then spin around behind him and lock in the rear naked choke. The technique demonstrated here allows you to reach the same end, but instead of forcing your opponent down to all fours and then sprawling, he shoots in for a takedown from striking range and you counter by executing a sprawl. It's best to position your arms in front of your opponent's shoulders when he shoots in because it makes it more difficult for him to reach your legs, but this can be hard to manage when he ducks underneath one of your punches and dives for your legs. In such a scenario, your best bet for blocking the takedown is to execute a heavy sprawl, which can be accomplished by throwing your feet back, driving your hips toward the mat, and positioning your stomach over your opponent's head. With all of your weight driving into his back, his forward momentum will get redirected into the mat, making it difficult for him to grab your legs, get underneath your hips, and haul you to the mat. Once you've successfully blocked the takedown, you'll usually have an opportunity to spin around to his back, get your hooks in, and finish him off with the rear naked choke.



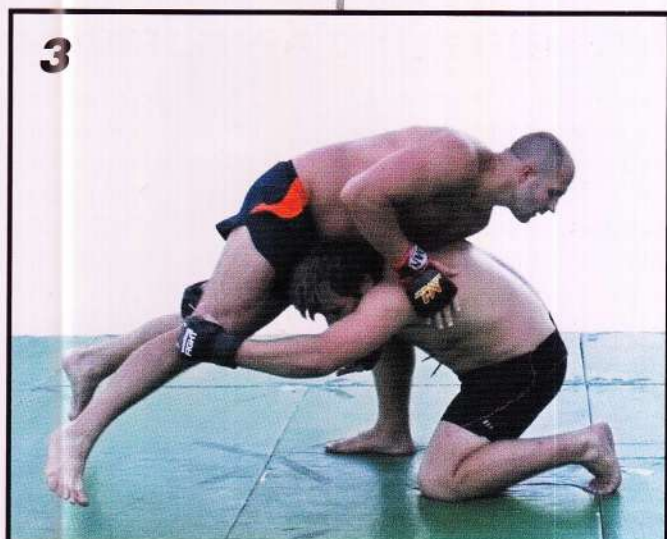
I'm squared off with Kirill.



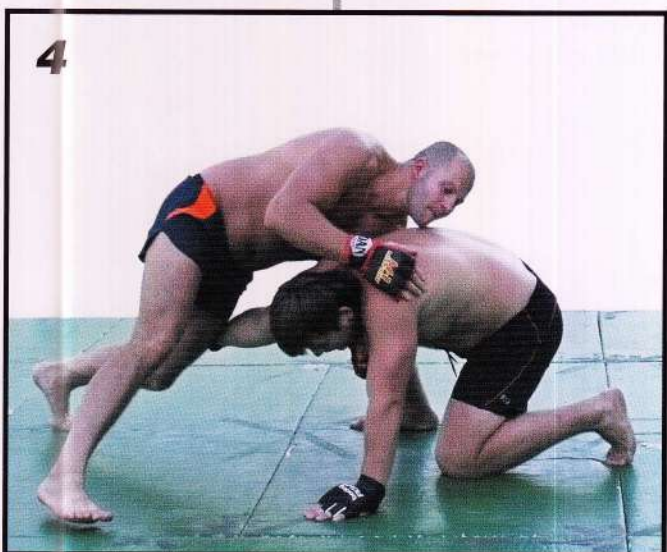
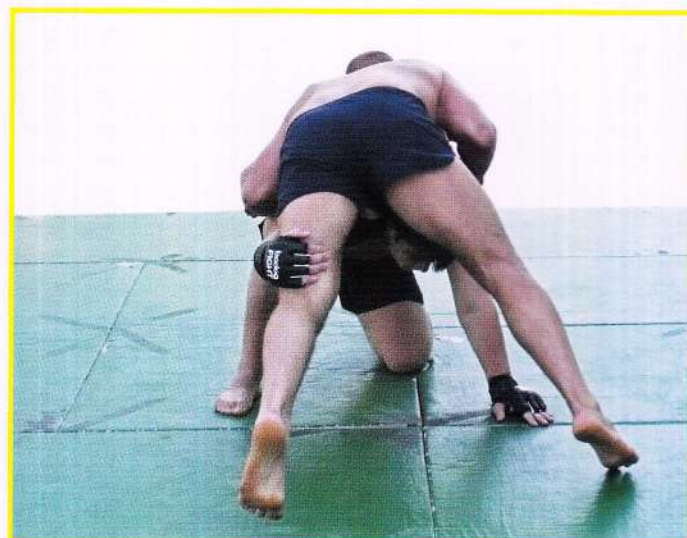
Kirill drops his elevation and shoots in for a takedown. Notice how he has gotten underneath my arms, making it difficult for me to position my arms in front of his shoulders.



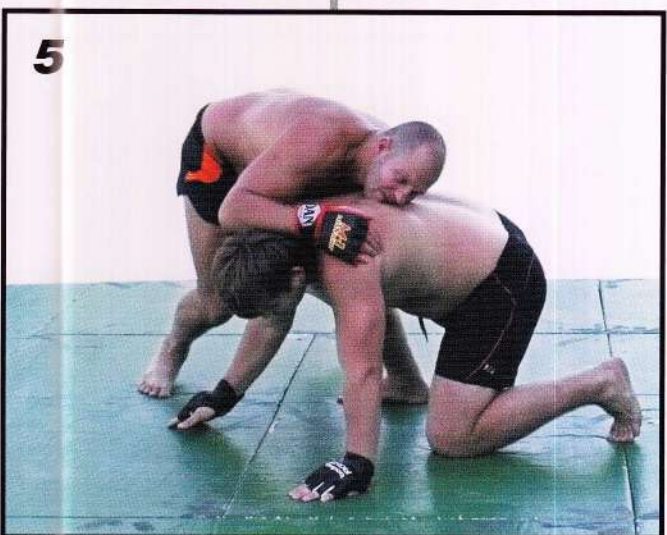
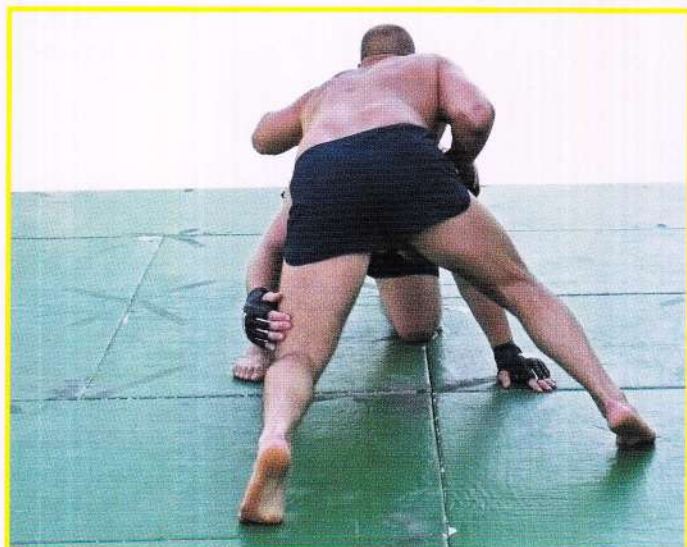




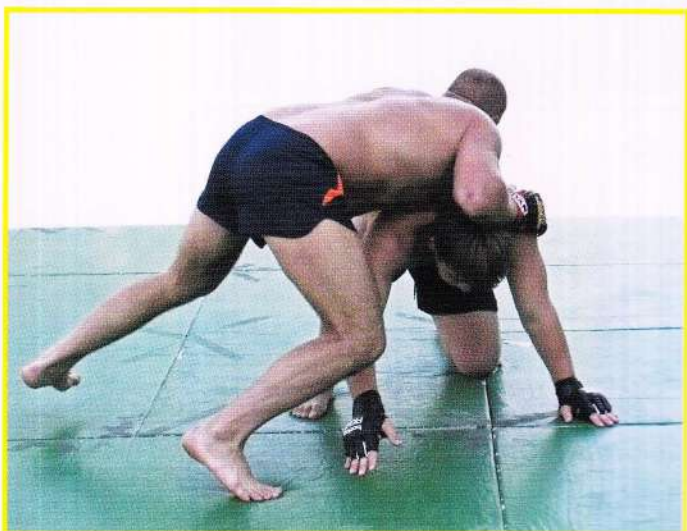
As Kirill drives forward, I sprawl my legs back and drive my torso down into his upper back and head. Notice how my actions stop his forward momentum and drive him down to his left knee.



Keeping my weight on Kirill's upper back, I sprawl my left leg further back to break his grip on my left leg.

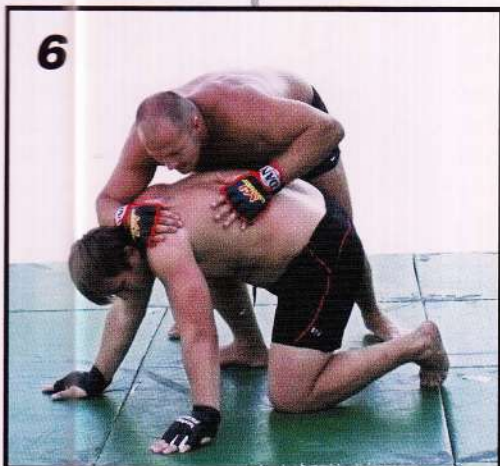


Once I've broken Kirill's right grip on my left leg, I keep my weight on his upper back and begin circling around his body in a clockwise direction.



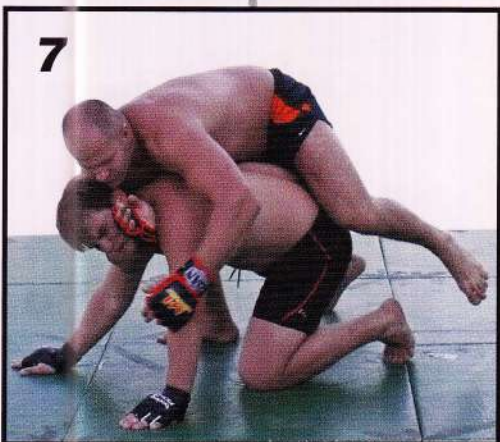


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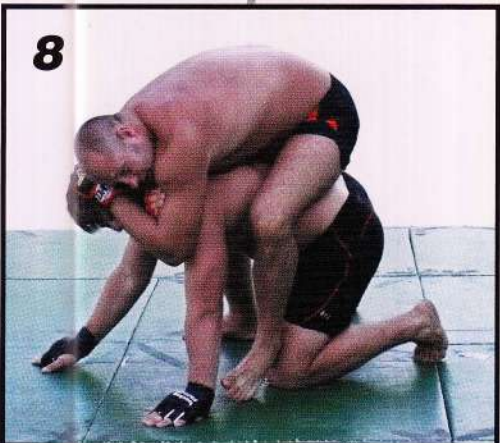
I continue to apply downward pressure and circle around behind Kirill.

7



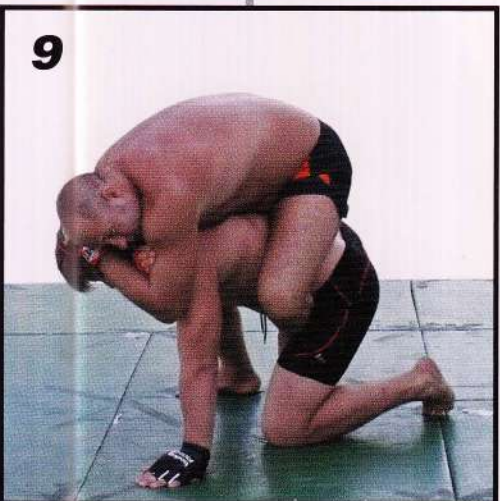
I hook my right leg to the inside of Kirill's right leg, and wrap my right arm around his neck.

8

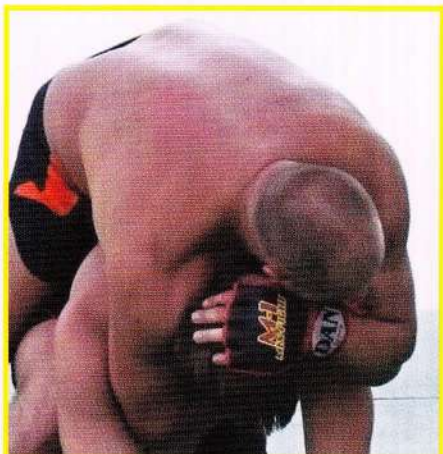
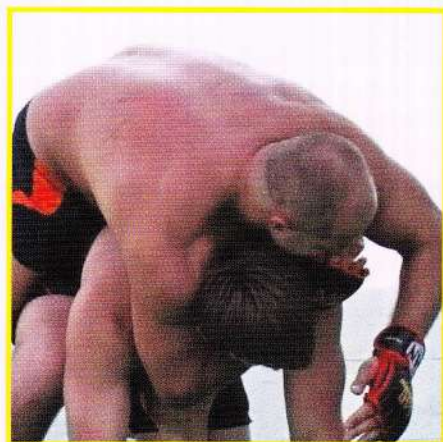
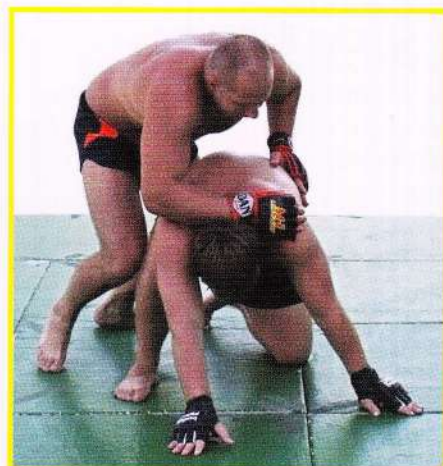


I secure my second hook by sliding my left leg to the inside of Kirill's left leg. At the same time, I grab my left biceps with my right hand and then place my left hand on the back of Kirill's head.

9



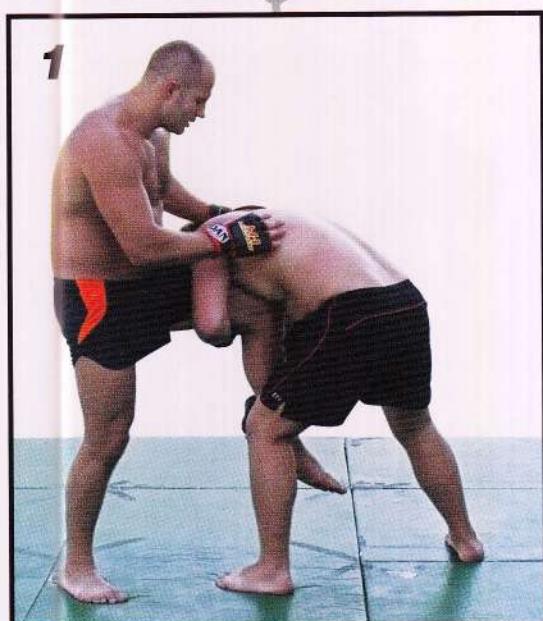
Hooking my left leg tight around the inside of Kirill's left leg, I finish the choke by squeezing my arms tight and applying downward pressure to the back of his head using my left hand.



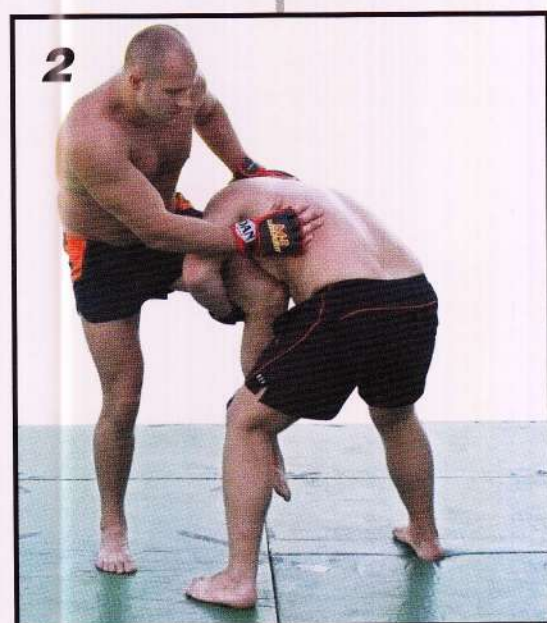


## SINGLE-LEG DEFENSE

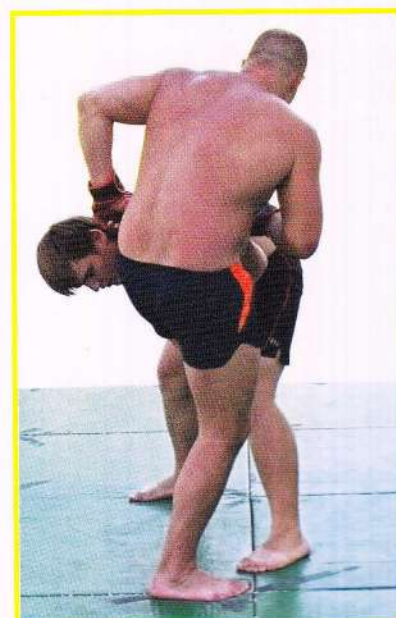
In this sequence I demonstrate an excellent technique for defending against a single-leg takedown when your opponent shoots in with his head to the outside of your body. Although most fighters learn to position their head to the inside of their opponent's body when executing a single-leg, there are several reasons your opponent might shoot in with his head positioned to the outside of your body, and then miss your rear leg and transition into a single. Other times he might position his head to the outside of your body for fear that you will counter with a sprawl, which would crush his head between your body and the mat and cause him a fair amount of pain. And still other times he might shoot in for a high crotch, which requires his head to be on the outside. Whatever the reasoning behind your opponent's actions, this is a wonderful technique to pull off when he shoots in for a single with his head on the outside. The instant he hoists your leg off the mat, push his head down and away from your body to create separation. This allows you to execute a cross face, reach your opposite arm over his body, and dive your chest into his back. The cross face limits his mobility, and with all of your weight resting on top of him, his hold on your leg will become considerably weaker. To break his grip completely, all you have to do is sprawl your captured leg back. Once accomplished, you can circle around to his back and either lock in a choke or begin throwing strikes. However, it is important to mention that because this move requires you to rip your leg out from your opponent's grasp, it tends to work best late in the fight when both of you are covered in sweat.



Kirill has shot in with his head to the outside of my body and hefted my lead leg off the mat in an attempt to execute a single-leg takedown.

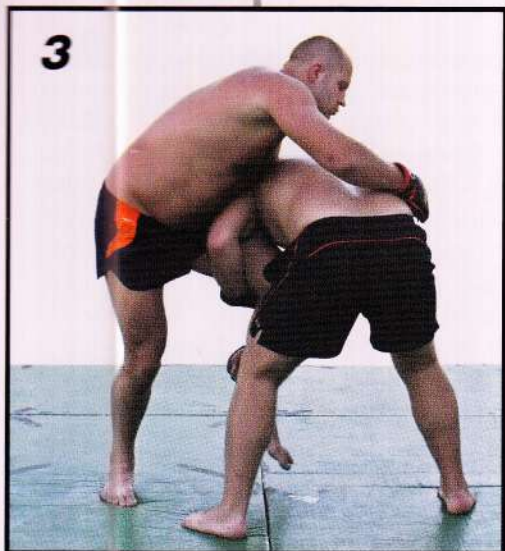


The instant Kirill picks my left leg off the mat, I weaken his grip by pushing his head down and away from my body using my left hand.

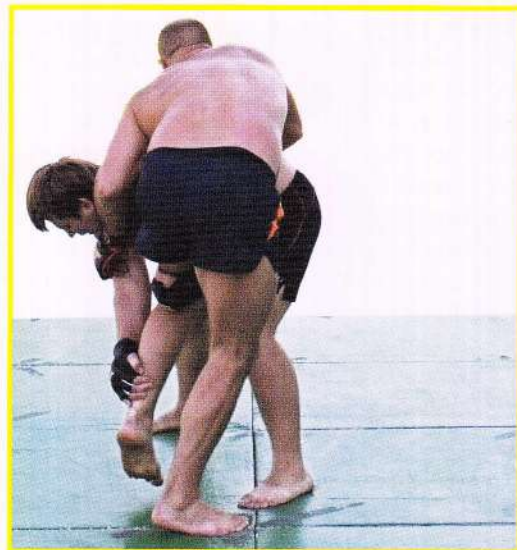




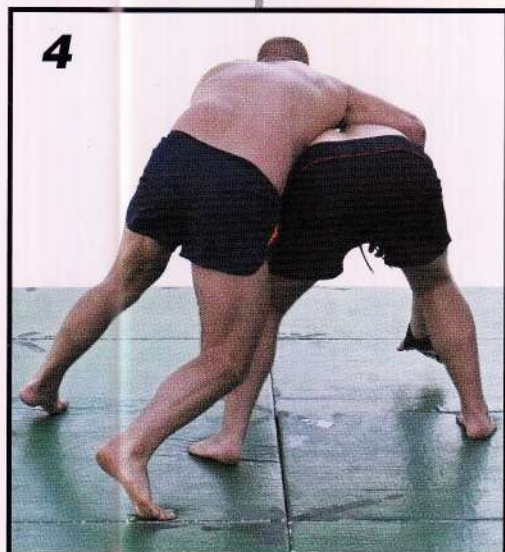
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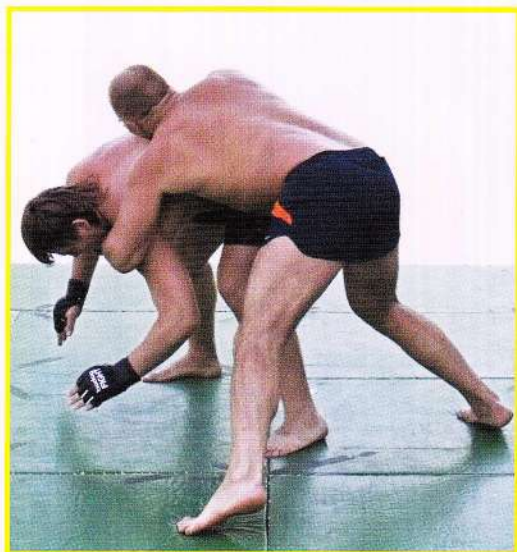
Having created space between our bodies, I wrap my left arm around the left side of Kirill's neck, reach my right arm over his back and around his right side, and drive my chest down into his left shoulder. These actions weaken his hold on my leg even more.



4



Continuing to drive my chest down into Kirill's left shoulder, I break his grip on my leg by sprawling my leg back, and then I plant my foot on the mat. Now that I've defended against the single-leg takedown, I can use my positioning to drag my opponent to the mat and work to apply a rear naked choke.





# GROUND TECHNIQUES

## TOP CONTROL

### GUARD TOP

When you take your opponent to the ground, the ideal situation is to land in a dominant position such as side control or the mount, but it's not always possible. Most of the time you'll find yourself stuck in between your opponent's legs in either his full or half guard. To prevent you from posturing up and unleashing a ground and pound assault, he will often wrap his arms around you to keep your posture broken down and begin working for sweeps and submissions. To deal with this scenario, I demonstrate several ways to counter your opponent's hold-downs and submissions, and then I demonstrate how to use ground and pound in conjunction with passes to move into more dominant positions. From the half guard, I also show how to set up fight-ending submissions such as shoulder cranks and leg locks. I highly recommend spending some time with this portion of the book. If you don't know how to fight from your opponent's guard, you're at risk of getting swept or submitted.

### SIDE MOUNT, MOUNT, AND REAR MOUNT

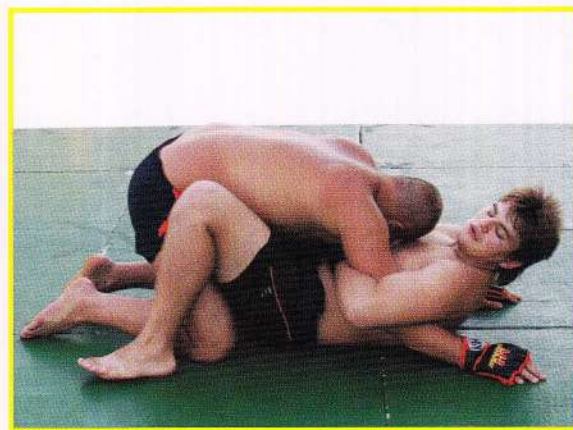
The side mount, mount, and rear mount are three of the most dominant positions that you can secure on the ground. Sometimes it can require a great deal of work to reach one of these positions, making it very important that you understand how to utilize them to finish your opponent. From the side mount, I demonstrate the shoulder lock submission that I used to finish a number of my opponent's, including Kevin Randleman and Mark Hunt in the Pride Fighting Championships. From the mount, I demonstrate how to utilize ground and pound to create openings for submissions, like the armbar I used to finish Matt Lindland. From the rear mount, I demonstrate how to eliminate your opponent's offense and make him vulnerable to submissions by flattening him out on the mat. There are literally hundreds of submissions that you can learn from the top position, but the ones I've included in this section have been tried and tested at the top levels of MMA competition. To ensure that you're ready in the worst-case scenario, I've also included various escapes for when your opponent claims side control, the mount, or rear mount.



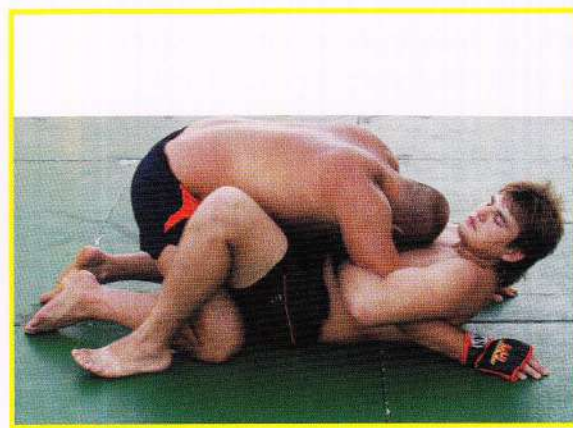
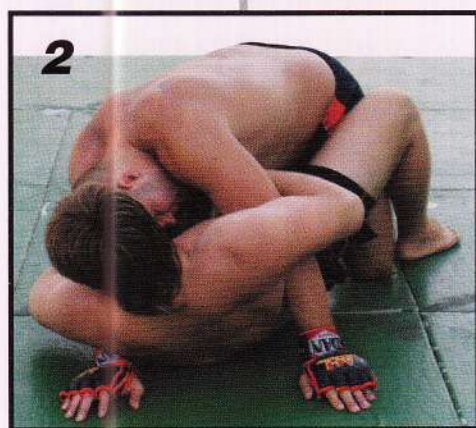
## OVERHOOK HOLD DOWN COUNTER

Whenever I land in my opponent's guard, my first instinct is to posture up. By creating space between my opponent's torso and mine, I am less vulnerable to submissions and can use my hips and the weight of my body to generate power for an assortment of downward punches such as hooks, overhands, and body shots. In addition to having the leeway to attack from multiple angles, posturing up in my opponent's guard also allows me to throw punches with greater speed and accuracy. However, achieving the postured-up position isn't always easy. Realizing you have the ability to cause a significant amount of damage if you're allowed freedom of movement, your opponent's first instinct will usually be to tie you up in some fashion and control your posture. The most common way for him to accomplish this is to establish double overhooks by wrapping his arms around the back of your arms and cinching down tight. The longer he manages to keep you trapped in this position, the more time he'll have to set up a submission such as an armbar or triangle. To prevent this from happening, I'll immediately escape his overhooks utilizing the technique demonstrated below.

If you look at the first photo in the sequence, you'll notice that my opponent has his arms locked tight around the fleshy part of my upper arms. Having very little mobility from my current position, trying to free both of my arms at the same time would be futile. As a result, I focus on escaping one arm at a time. If I choose to free my left arm first, I'll lean my weight toward my right side. This not only creates the space I need to straighten my left arm, but also to rotate it in a clockwise direction so that my opponent is gripping the bony part of my forearm instead of my bulky triceps. With little friction to maintain his viselike grip, I can pull my elbow free from his clutches. And once I free my elbow, I can easily pull the rest of my arm free. After repeating the process with my opposite arm, my opponent will no longer be able to control my posture. To prevent him from establishing some other type of control, I'll immediately sit up and begin my ground and pound assault.

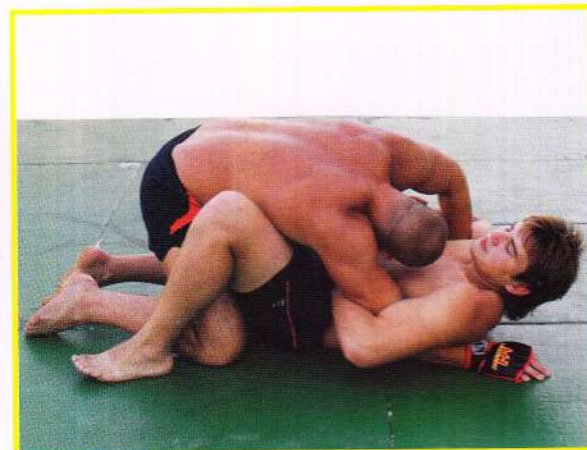
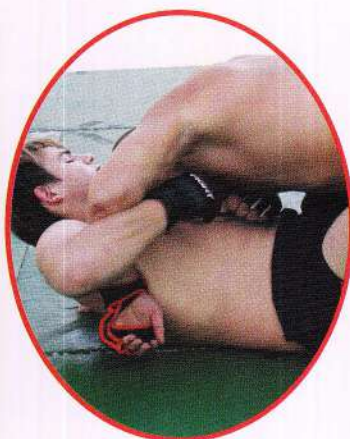


Kirill has me broken down in his guard. To prevent me from posturing up, he has secured double overhook control.

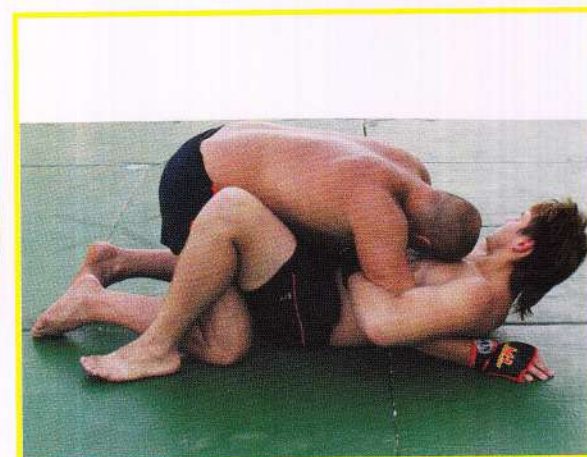
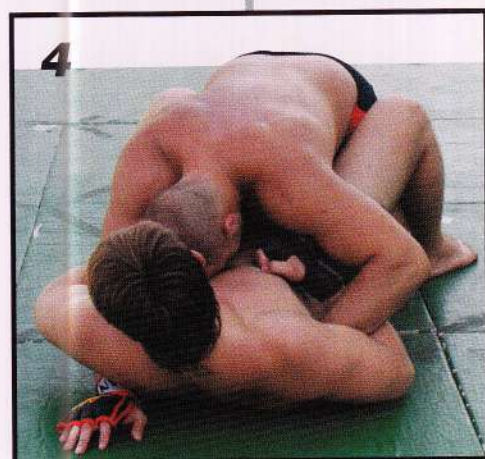


In order to get my offense going, I need to free my arms. I begin this process by leaning my weight to my right side to create space. Next, I use that space to not only straighten my left arm, but also slightly rotate it so that the bony part of my forearm is pressed against the inside of Kirill's grip. This makes it very difficult for him to maintain tight control on my left arm.

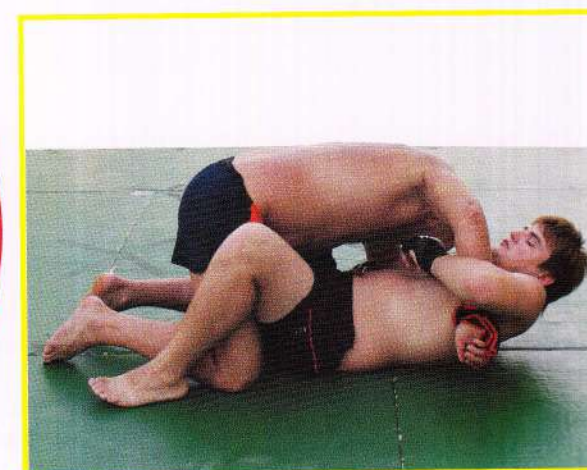
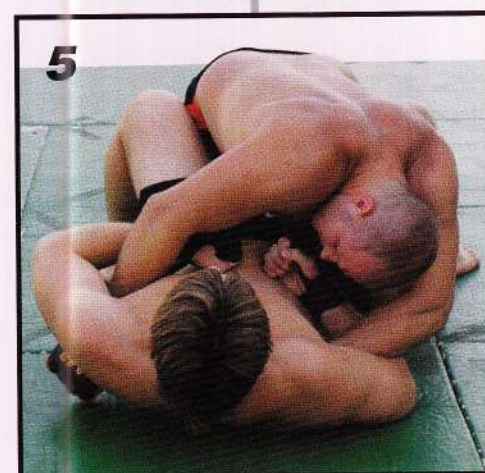




Leaning further to my right side, I rotate my left arm in a clockwise direction and free my left elbow. It is important to note that I'm keeping my arm completely relaxed during this process.

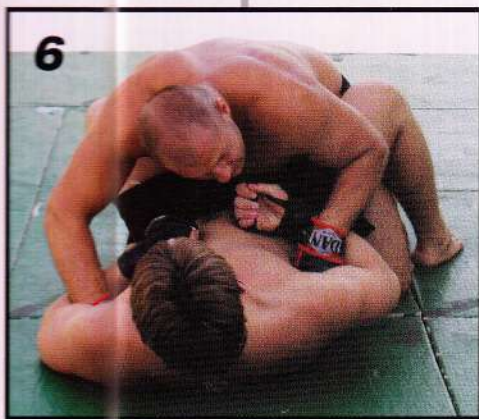


Instead of pulling my left hand completely free, I drive downward with my left elbow, pinning Kirill's right arm to the mat with my forearm. This will prevent him from reestablishing his overhook on my left arm as I work to free my right arm.

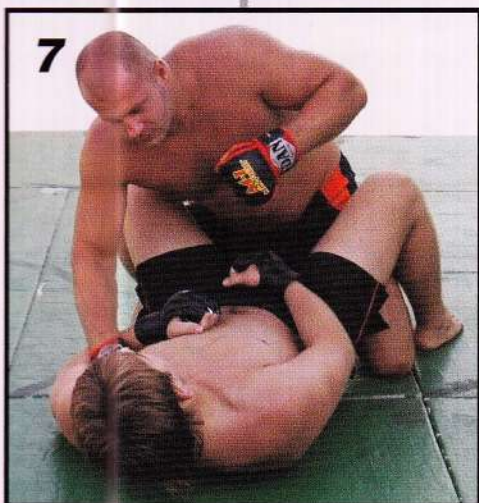


To create space on my right side, I lean to my left. Next, I straighten my right arm and rotate it in a counterclockwise direction.

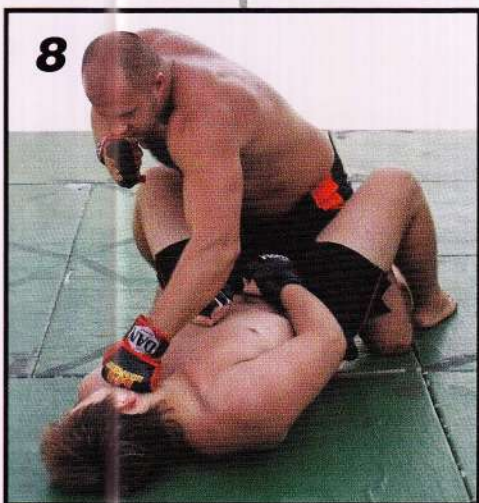




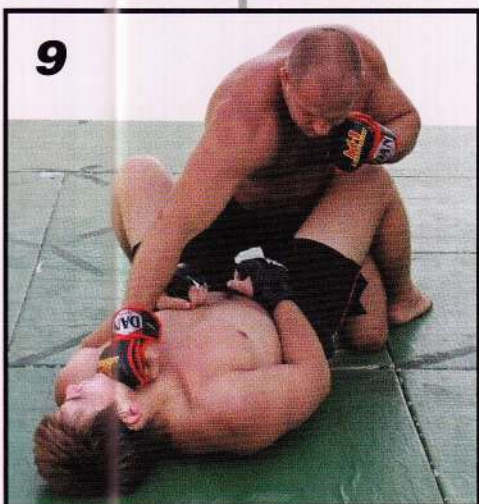
The instant I free my right arm from Kirill's overhook, I begin to posture up.



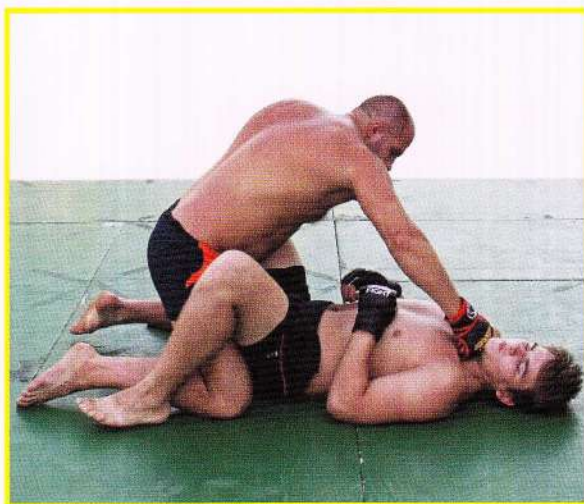
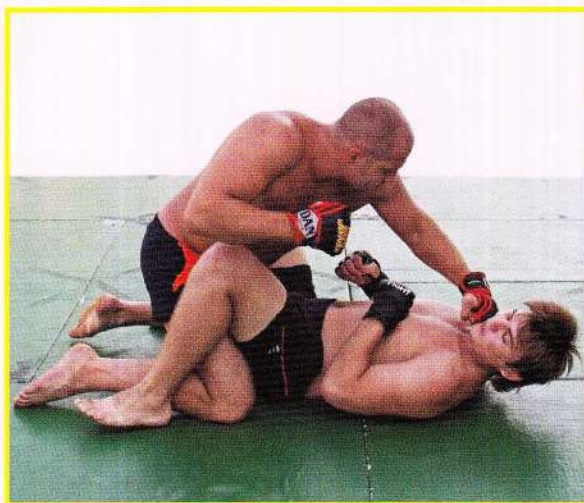
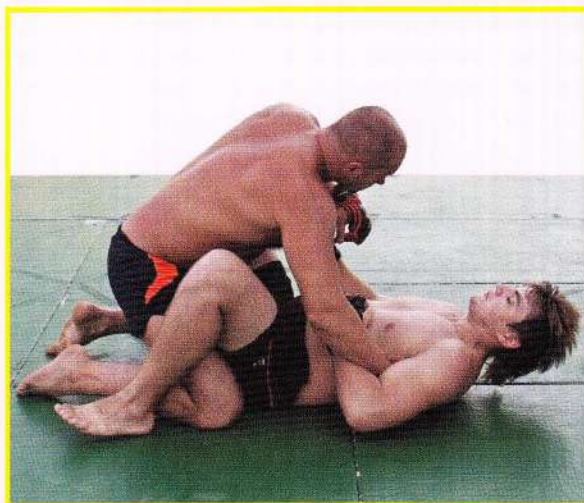
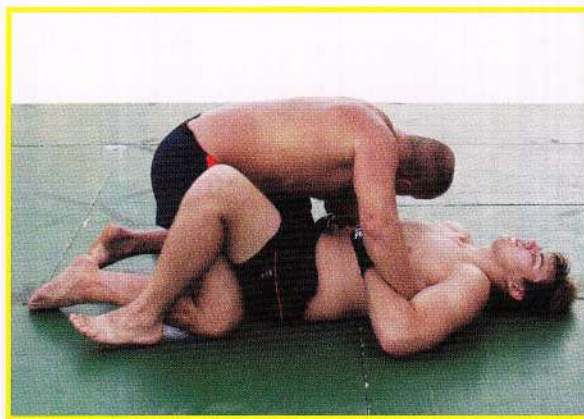
I straighten my posture and cock my left hand back.



Rotating my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, I throw a straight left at Kirill's face.



As I pull my left hand back toward my face, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction and throw a straight right at Kirill's chin. It is important to notice that I'm not just throwing the punch from my shoulder—I'm utilizing my hips and entire body, which allows me to generate a lot more power.



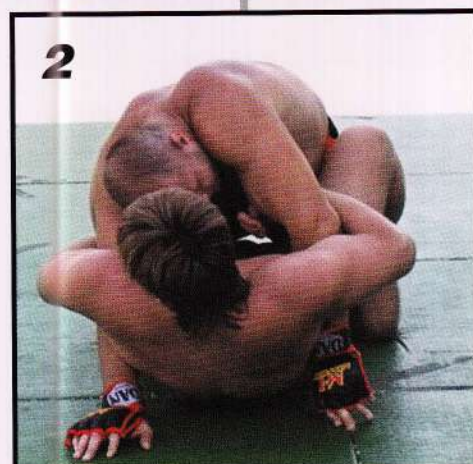
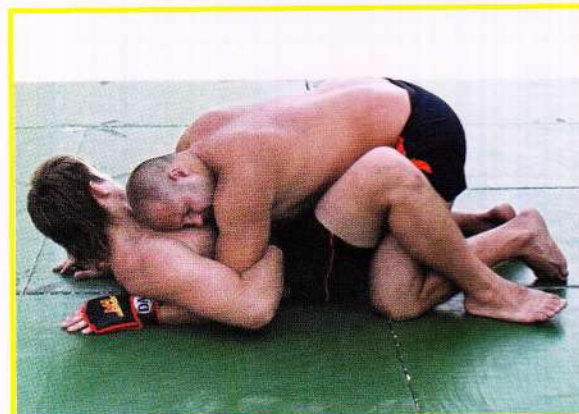


## OVERHOOK HOLD DOWN COUNTER 2

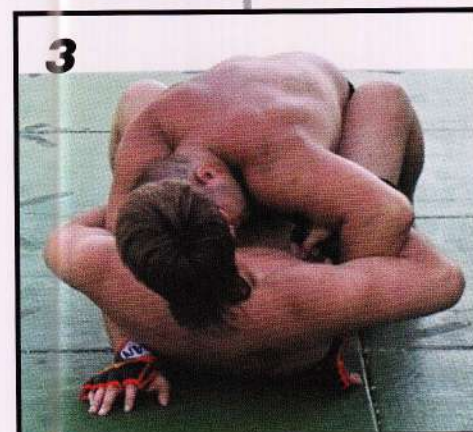
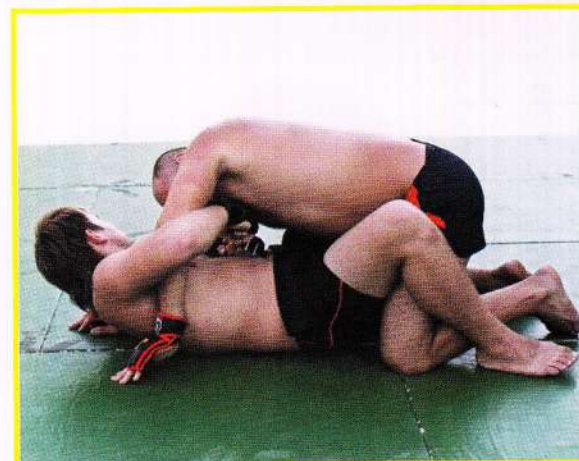
This is another technique that you can utilize when you're in your opponent's guard and he establishes double overhooks to prevent you from posturing up. It is similar to the previous technique in that you use the same method to free one of your arms, but instead of immediately attempting to free your other arm, you launch an attack. To accomplish this, use the arm you just freed to trap your opponent's arm to his side. For example, if you freed your left arm from your opponent's right overhook, drive your left wrist into his right forearm to trap his arm to his side. Once you've acquired the posture to throw a hard punch, release your control over his arm and throw a quick overhand at his face. Because your opponent still has a tight overhook on your opposite arm, moving his head out of the way will be difficult. His only option to block the punch is to elevate the arm you had trapped to his side. However, when you throw the punch quickly enough, the chances are your strike will land before he can bring his arm up to block it.



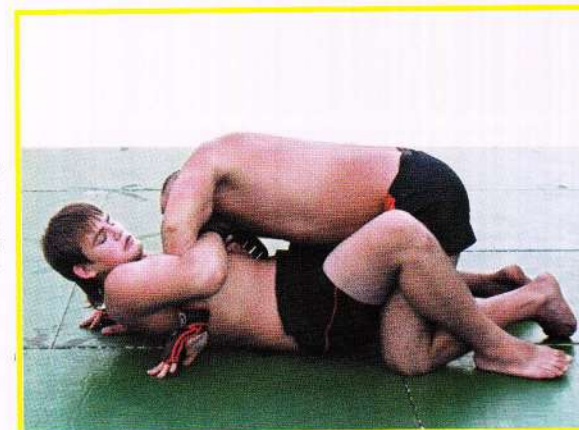
I'm in Kirill's guard. To prevent me from posturing up and throwing punches, he has secured overhook control on both of my arms.



In order to get my offense going, I need to free my left arm. I begin this process by leaning my weight to my right side to create space. Next, I use that space to not only straighten my left arm, but also slightly rotate it so that the bony part of my forearm is pressed against the inside of his grip. This makes it very difficult for him to maintain tight control on my left arm.



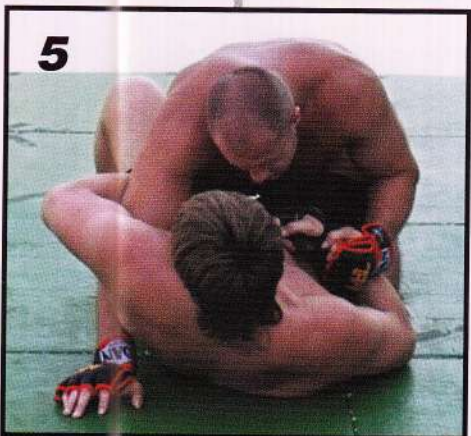
I rotate my left arm in a clockwise direction and free my left elbow. It is important to note that I'm keeping my arm completely relaxed during this process.



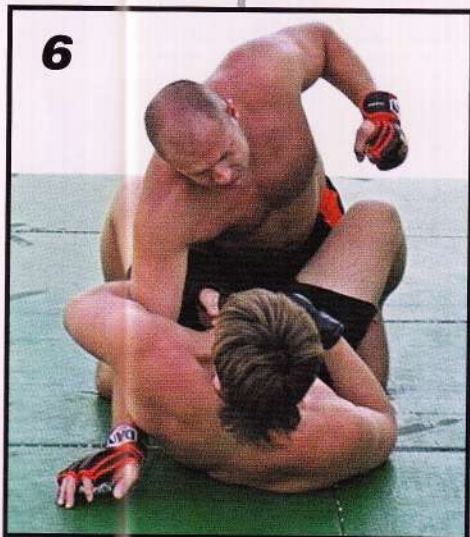




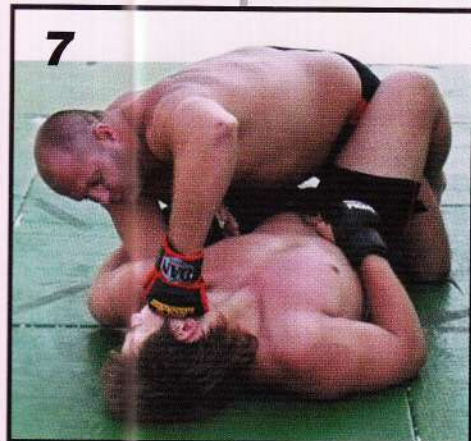
Keeping my left wrist hooked around the inside of Kirill's right forearm, I draw my left arm into my body.



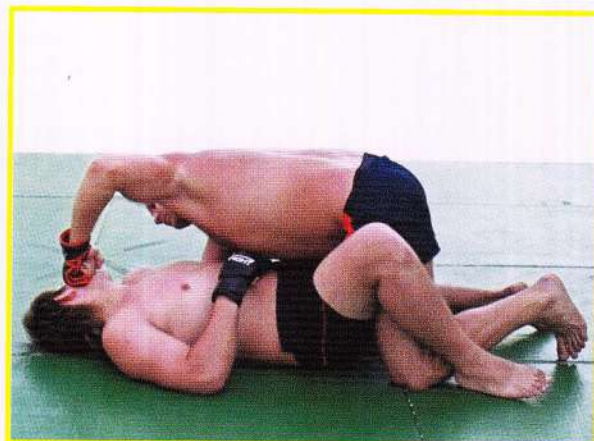
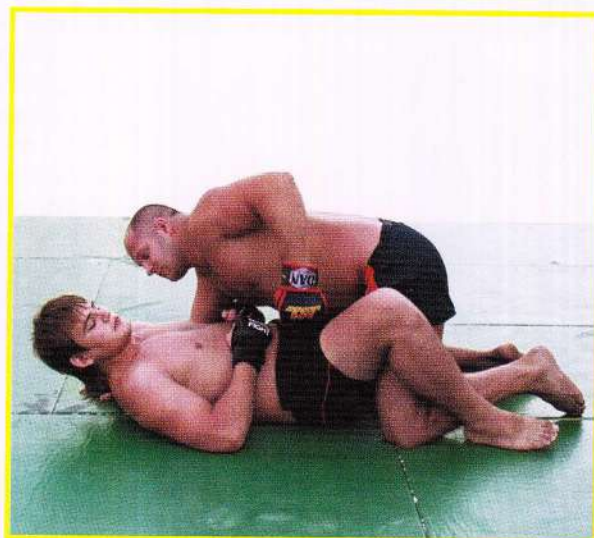
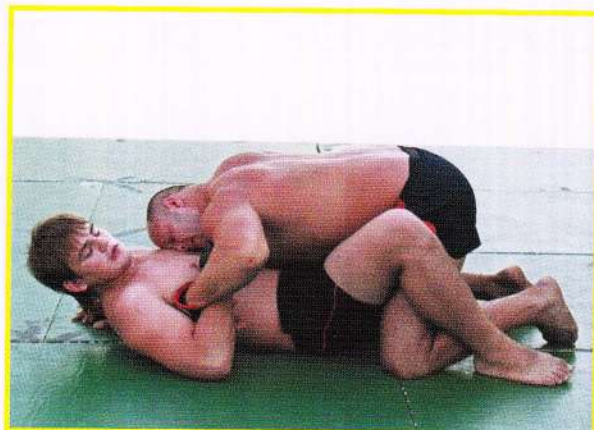
Keeping my left hand hooked over Kirill's right hand, I clamp my left elbow tight to my body.



I push off the mat with my right arm and cock my left hand back.



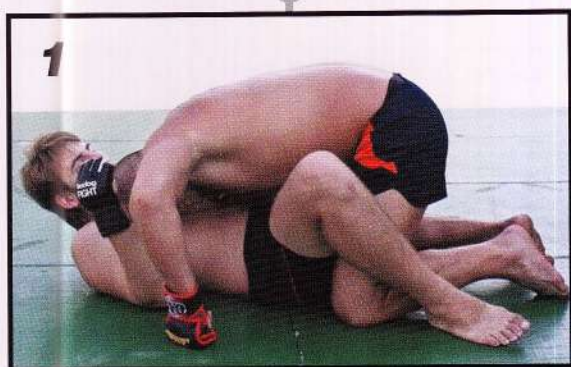
Before Kirill can bring his right arm up to protect his face, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and throw a left overhand at his face.



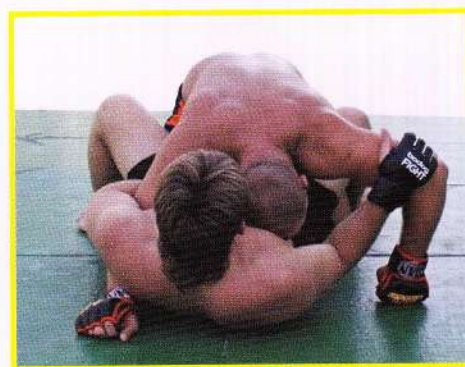


## BODY-BODY-HEAD COMBO

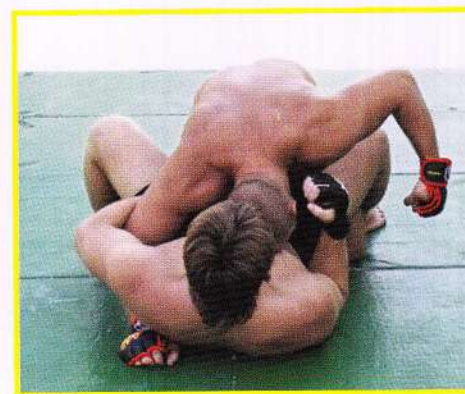
It is just as important to utilize striking combinations when fighting on the ground as it is when fighting on your feet. And the best striking combinations tend to be ones that target at least a couple of different areas on your opponent's body. In the scenario presented below, my opponent has captured me in his guard and secured an overhook on my right arm, leaving me with only my left arm to punch with. As with most good fighters, his first instinct is to protect the right side of his face by elevating his right arm. Instead of trying to sneak past his guard, I chop my left fist into the right side of his ribcage to get him to lower his right arm. Sometimes all it takes is one shot, and sometimes it takes half a dozen. It all depends upon your opponent's tolerance for pain. Once he does drop his arm to protect his ribs, that's when I throw a hard overhand left at his face. Most of the time your opponent will know exactly what you're trying to accomplish by attacking his ribs. After all, going to the body and then the head is perhaps the most common combination in fighting. It's the ground version of throwing a low kick and following up with a hard punch. But even understanding your intentions, there is not much your opponent can do. By varying your target, you put him into a position to either protect his body or his head, and no matter which one he chooses, he is going to take some abuse. The nice part about this technique is that it works on all fighters, even those who have a masterful ground game.



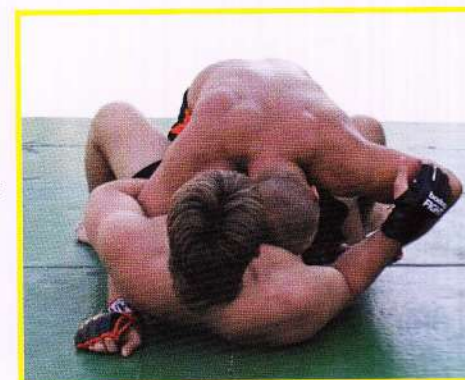
Kirill has captured me in his open guard and secured an overhook on my right arm to prevent me from posturing up.



Realizing that I can still strike with my left hand, Kirill elevates his right arm to protect the right side of his face. Immediately I draw my left arm back and prepare to throw a left body hook to his ribs.



I chop my left fist into the right side of Kirill's ribcage.





4



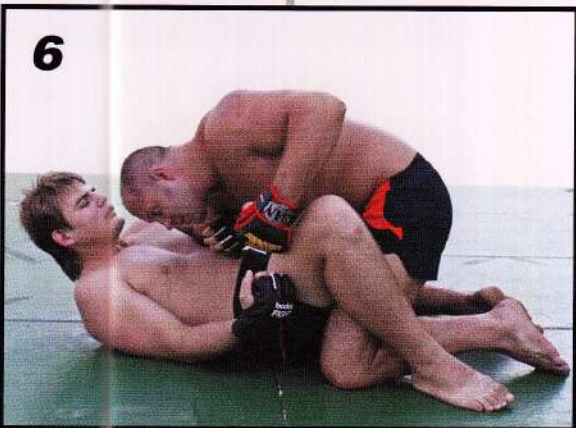
Kirill keeps his right arm up to protect his face, and I draw my left hand back to land another hook to his ribs.

5



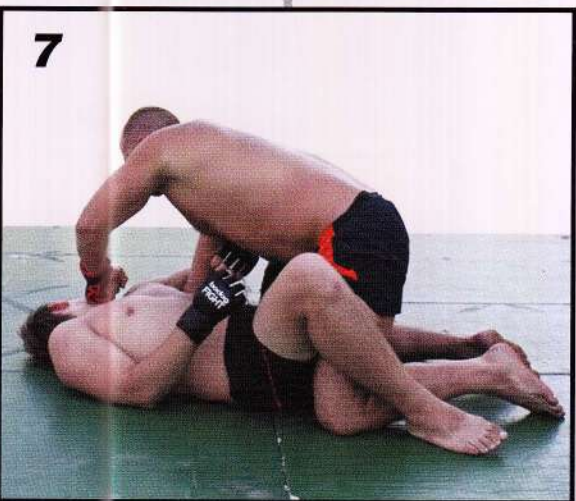
I chop another left hook into Kirill's ribs, making sure to strike the exact same spot as before.

6

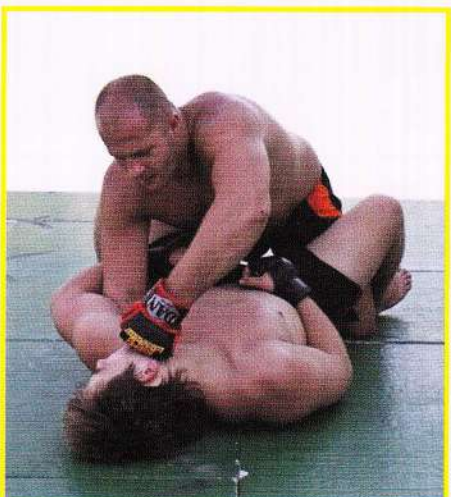
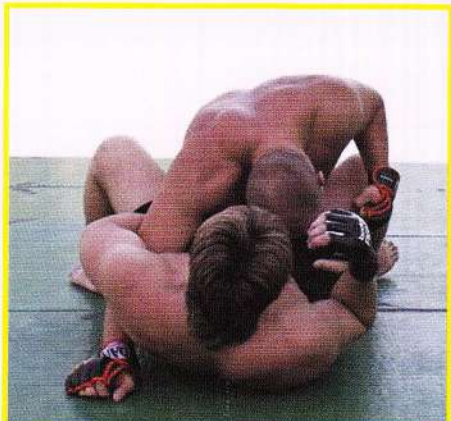
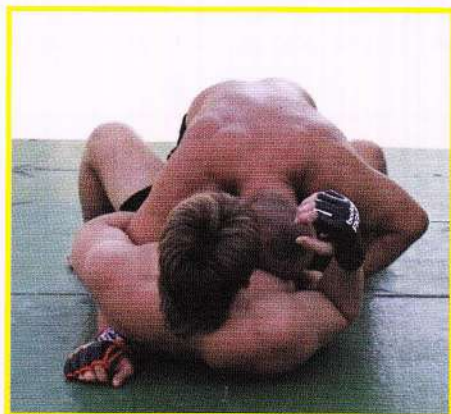
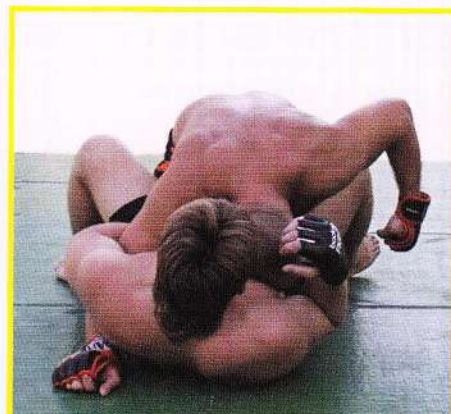


With my second strike having caused Kirill some pain, he drops his right arm to protect his ribs from another body punch.

7



The instant Kirill drops his right arm to protect his ribs, I throw an overhand left at his unprotected face.



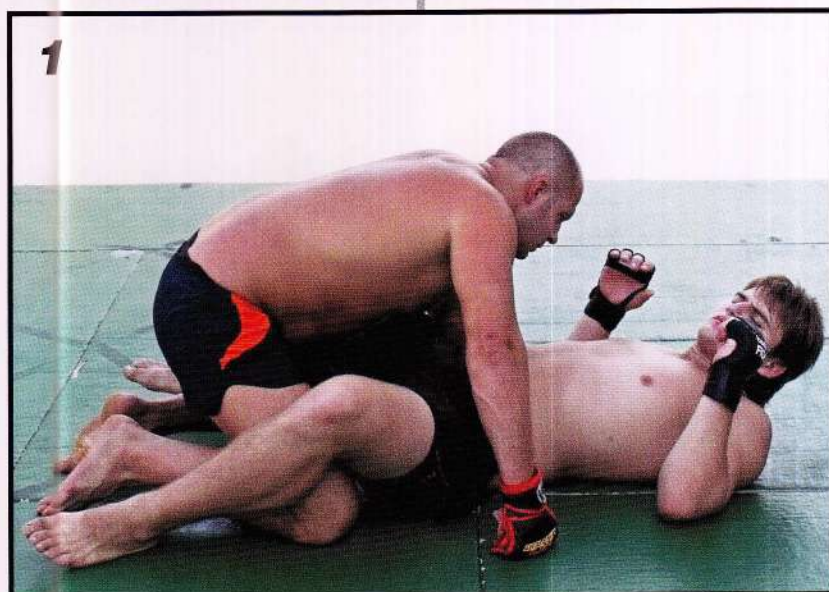


## KIMURA COUNTER TO OVERHAND RIGHT

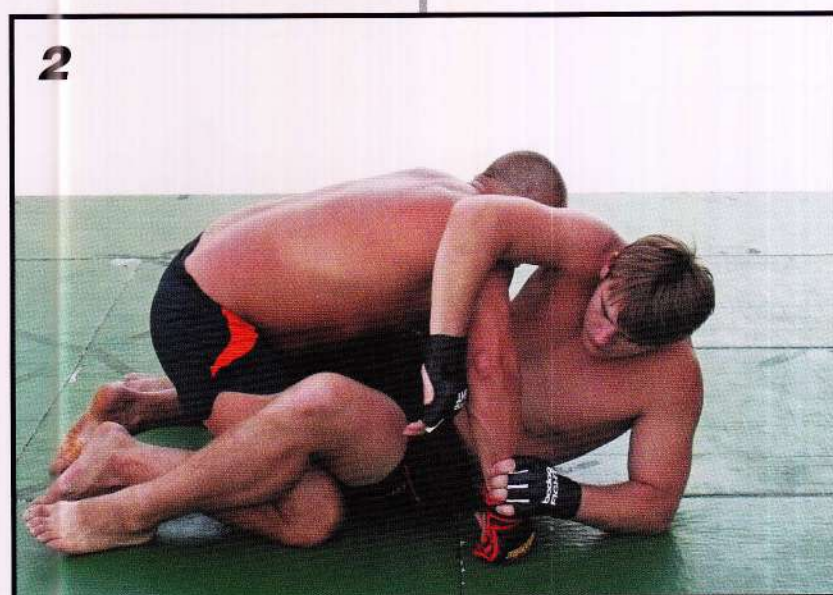
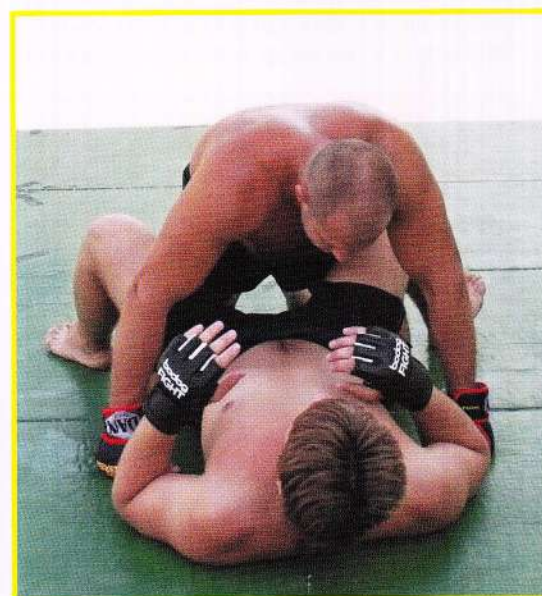
Although it is possible to cause your opponent a lot of damage with strikes when in his guard, you must always be ready to defend against submissions. One of the submissions you're most vulnerable to is the kimura. In order to apply this submission, your opponent must first establish a figure-four lock on one of your arms (see figure A). If he manages to secure this hold, his chances of finishing the kimura increase dramatically, making it very important that you are quick to react to his movements. The instant he grabs one of your wrists, straighten the arm that is being attacked, posture up, and then pull your arm toward your body to break his grip. A quick escape will leave your opponent on his side with his arms low on his body in the figure-four position, making it an ideal time to throw strikes at his unprotected face. When I fought MMA jiu-jitsu specialist Antonio Nogueira in the Pride Fighting Championships, I used this exact technique countless times. Every time I landed in his guard, he would secure wrist control, sit up onto his side, and attempt to lock in a kimura. Before he could establish a tight lock, I'd rip my arm free and land a powerful punch to his face. However, it is important to mention that this technique tends not to work when your opponent manages to secure a tight figure-four lock on your arm. In such a situation, your best bet for avoiding the submission is to utilize the next technique in this section.



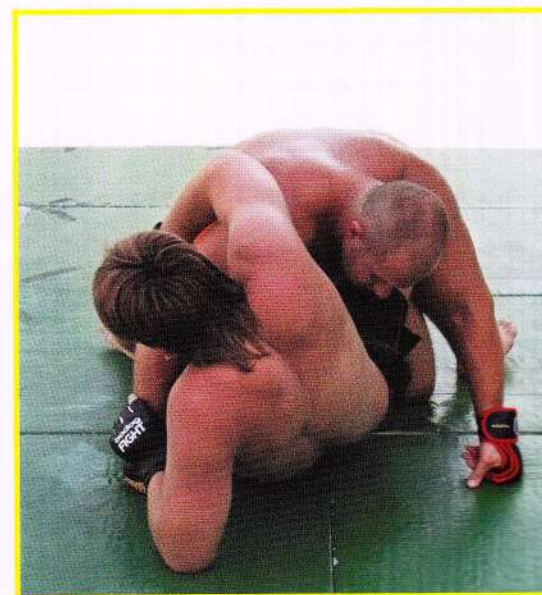
figure A



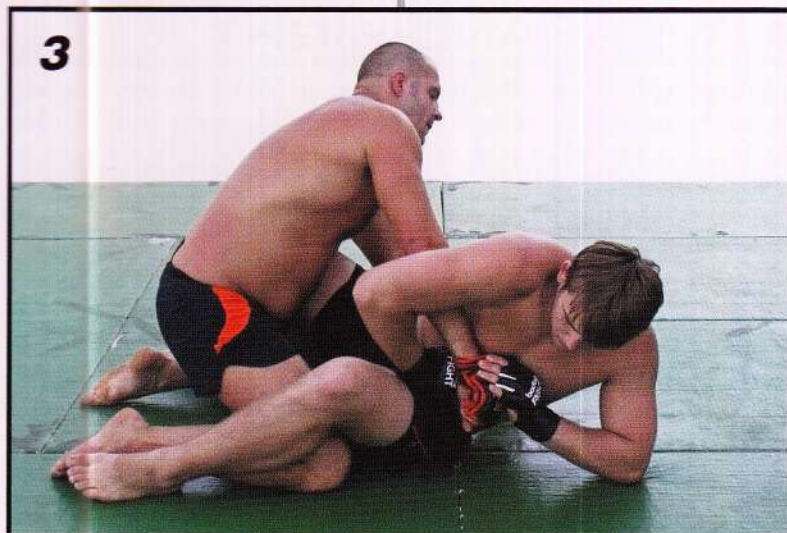
I'm in Kirill's open guard.



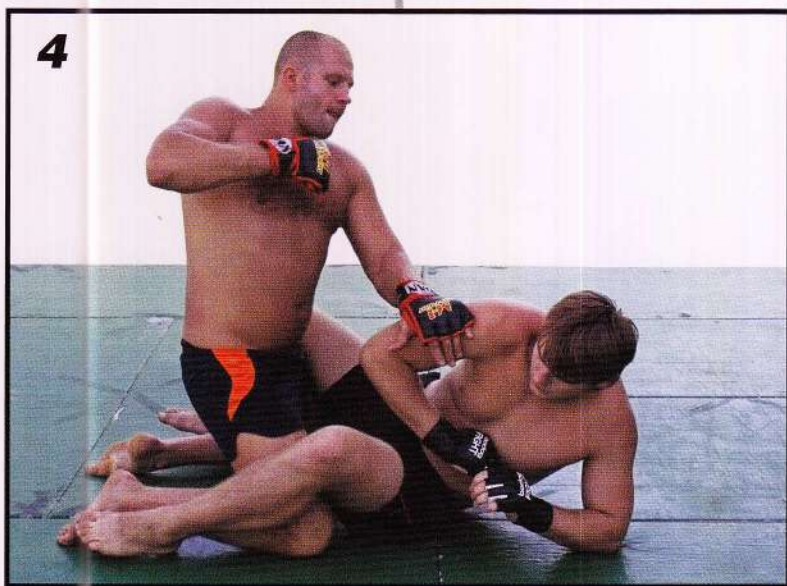
In an attempt to lock in a kimura on my right arm, Kirill grabs my right wrist with his left hand, sits up, posts his left elbow on the mat, and reaches his right arm over the back of my right arm.



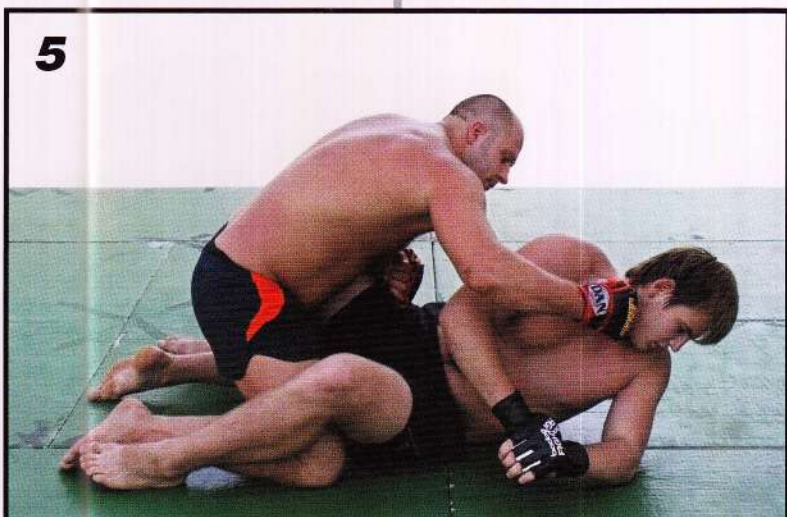




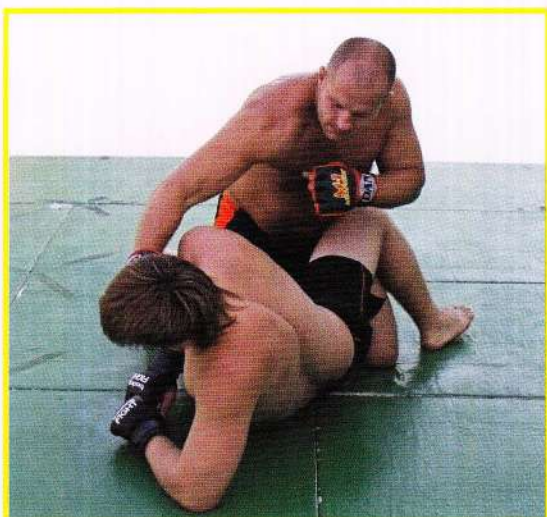
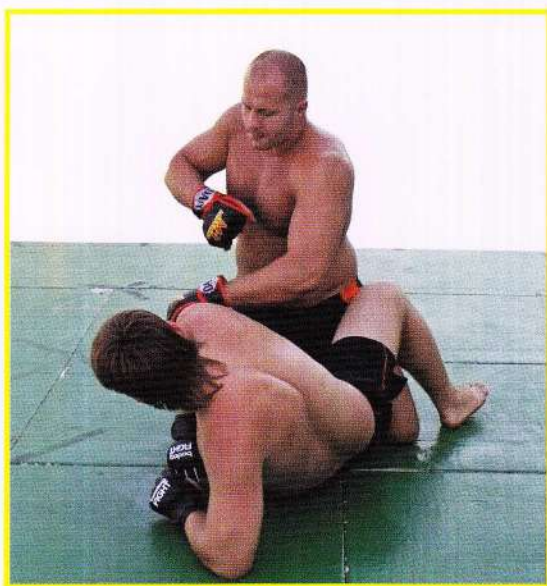
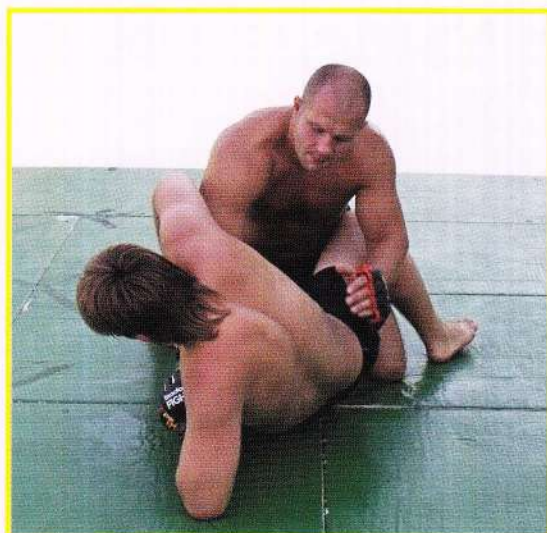
Before Kirill can grab his left wrist with his right hand, which would allow him to establish a figure-four lock, I straighten my right arm, posture up, and then pull my right arm toward my body. The more relaxed and straight you keep your arm when tugging it free, the more difficultly your opponent will have securing his grip.



I posture up and rip my right arm free from Kirill's grasp. To capitalize on his position, I immediately draw my right arm back in preparation to throw a punch.



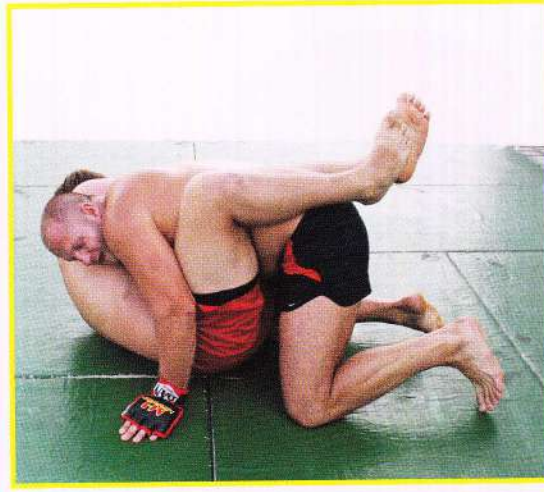
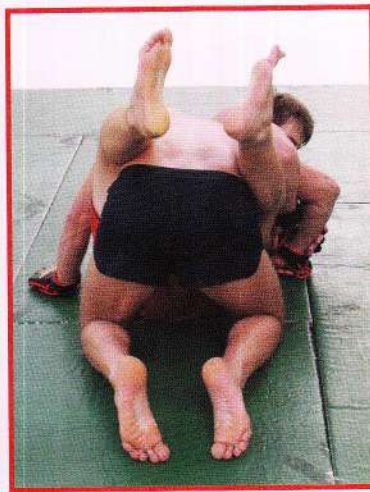
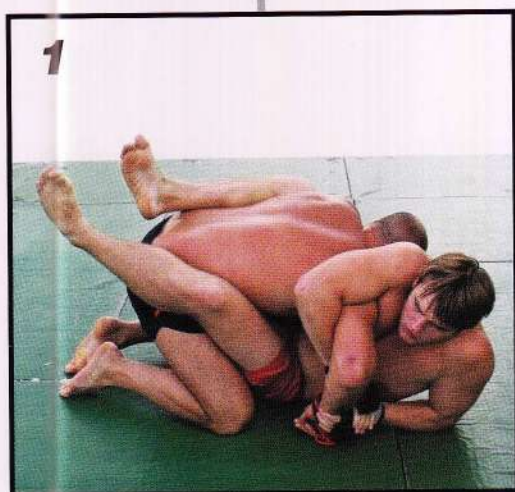
Rotating my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I throw a hard right cross at Kirill's face.



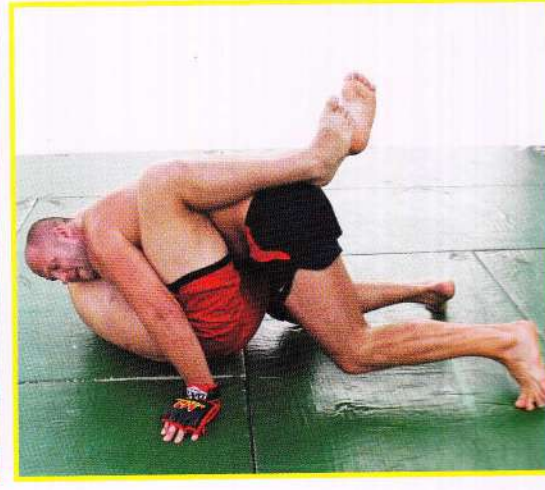
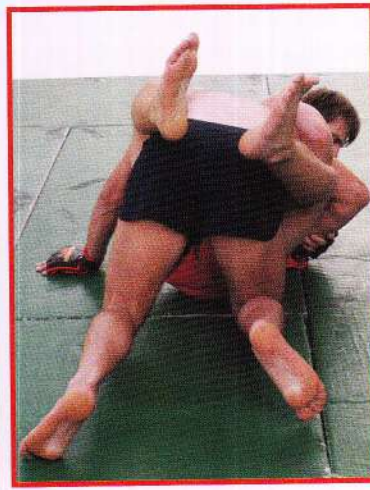
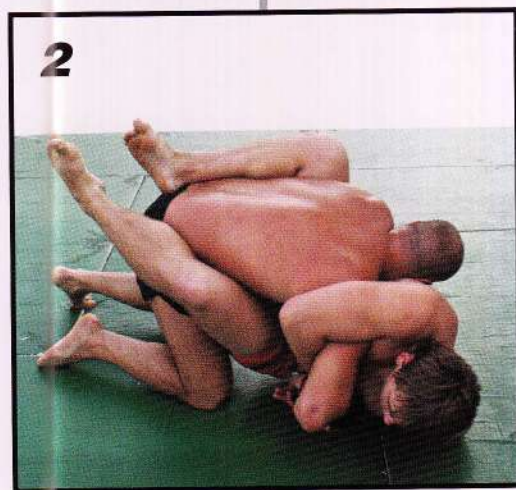


## BLOCKING THE KIMURA

When you're in your opponent's guard and he attempts to lock in a kimura, there are two things he must accomplish. First, he must establish a figure-four lock on one of your arms. Second, he must crank your isolated arm behind your back, which requires him to scoot his body out from underneath yours. It's best to utilize the previous escape because it shuts down your opponent's attack before he can establish his hold, but that isn't always possible, especially when up against an experienced jiu-jitsu practitioner. If your opponent manages to establish a figure-four, your best chance for escape is no longer attempting to free your arm, but rather preventing your opponent from accomplishing his second goal, which is to crank your arm behind your back. This can be managed in two simple steps. The first step is to hook your isolated hand around your inner thigh. This will make it more difficult for your opponent to force your arm behind your back and lock in the submission. The second step is to drive your body forward and stack all of your weight over your isolated arm. This will prevent your opponent from scooting his body out from underneath your body and assuming the angle he needs to finish the submission. Once you assume this defensive position, your opponent will most likely release his hold and work for another attack. If he doesn't let go and continues to try to fight for the submission, hold your position until you feel his grip on your arm begin to loosen. The moment it does, utilize the previous technique and rip your arm free.

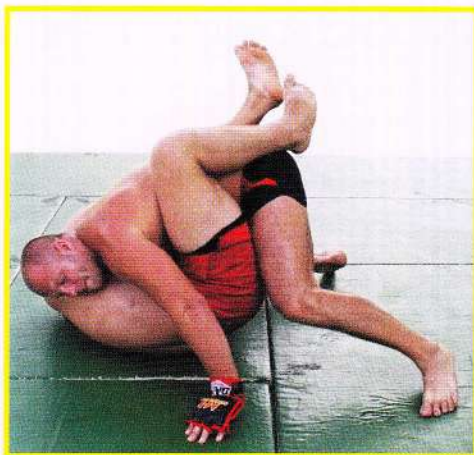
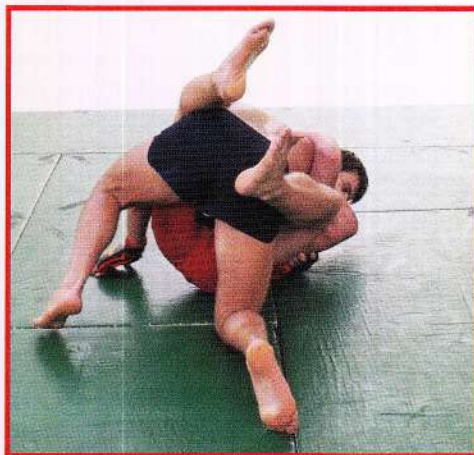
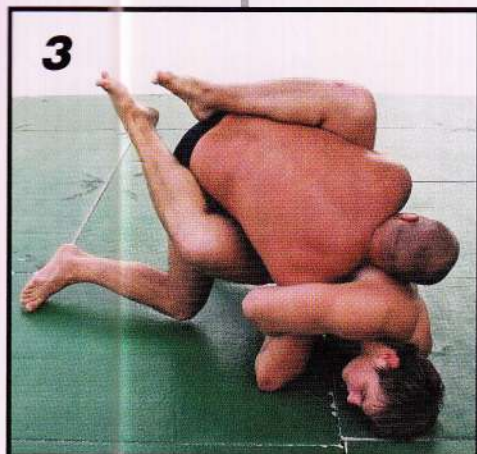


Kirill has secured a kimura lock on my right arm. He accomplished this by gripping my right wrist with his left hand, reaching his right arm over my right triceps, and then grabbing his left wrist with his right hand. With his right arm hooked over my right elbow, I can't utilize the previous kimura escape and pull my arm free. Instead, I must block the kimura by stacking him in his guard.

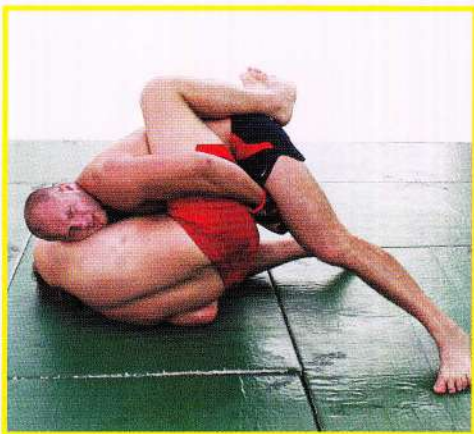


To stack Kirill in his guard, I drive off my left foot and thrust my right shoulder forward.





I climb up to my left foot and drive my right shoulder forward and toward the mat. By stacking Kirill in his guard in this manner, I have prevented him from scooting his hips out from underneath me and acquiring the angle he needs to finish the submission.

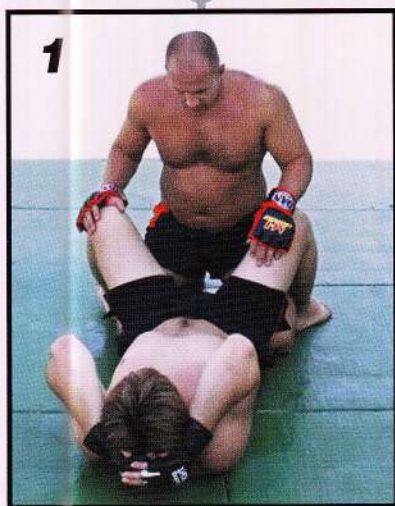


Still posting on my left leg and driving my weight forward, I press my right knee into Kirill's buttocks and cup my right hand around the inside of my right thigh. This prevents him from pulling my arm away from my body, forcing it behind my back, and then applying pressure to my shoulder. I will continue to hold this position until Kirill decides to let go of his lock.

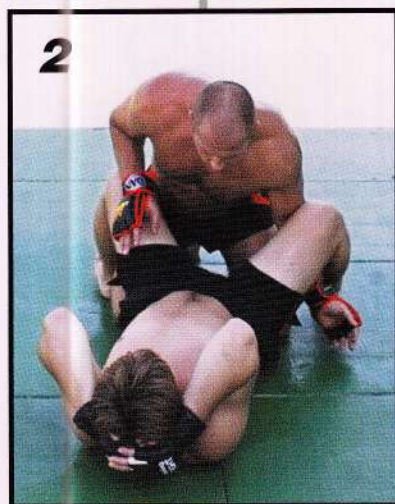
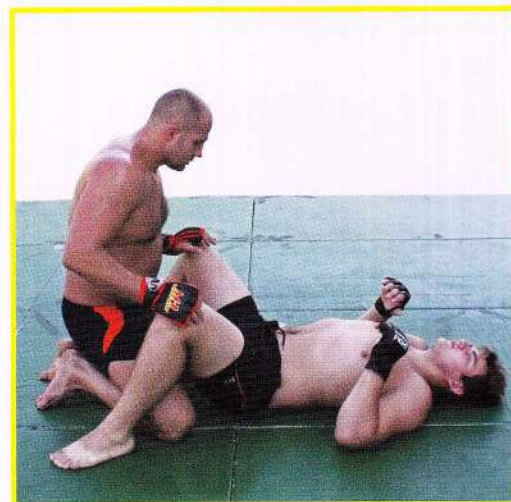


## HALF UNDERPASS TO OVERHAND RIGHT

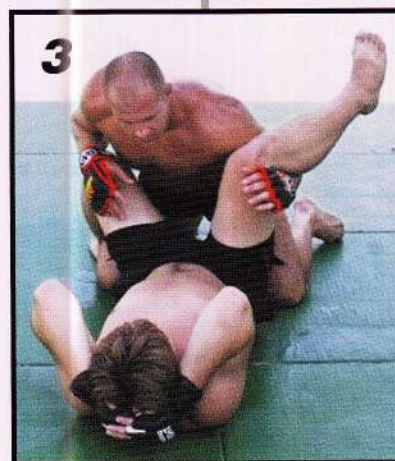
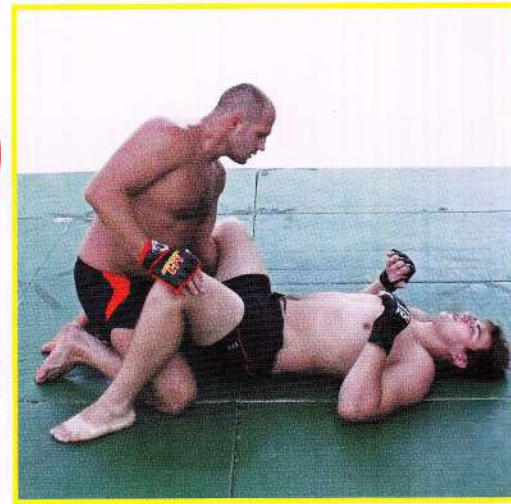
Even when you posture up in your opponent's guard, it can sometimes be difficult to land clean punches. This is especially true when up against an opponent who is an expert at using his legs to maintain distance between your bodies. In such a situation, sometimes your best option is to transition into the side control position. There are virtually hundreds of different passes that you can utilize, but the half underpass has worked exceptionally well for me. If you look at the sequence below, you'll notice that I set up the technique by driving my left arm underneath my opponent's right leg. To prevent him from capturing my right arm and head between his legs and applying a triangle choke, I keep my posture erect and my right arm tucked close to my body. Once I have my opponent's leg hooked, I rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction and throw his right leg toward the right side of my body. This not only clears a path for me to transition into side control, but it also positions my hips and shoulders to throw a powerful overhand right. In order to be effective with either the pass or the strike, it is important that your movements are explosive.



I'm postured up in Kirill's open guard.



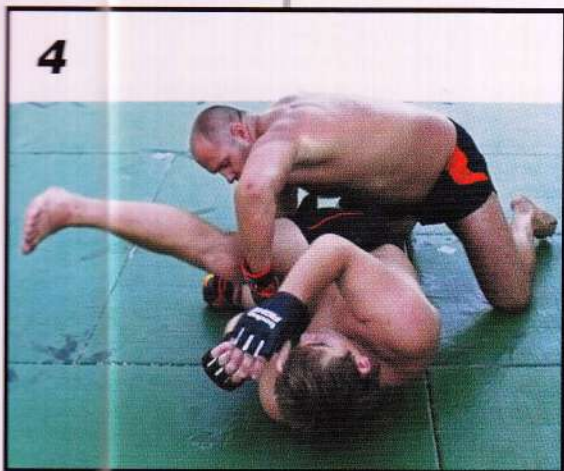
Keeping my weight back and my right arm tight to my body to prevent Kirill from locking in a triangle choke, I reach my left hand underneath his right leg.



I scoop my left arm underneath Kirill's right leg. For the best control, I've lined up the crook of my arm with the crook of his leg.

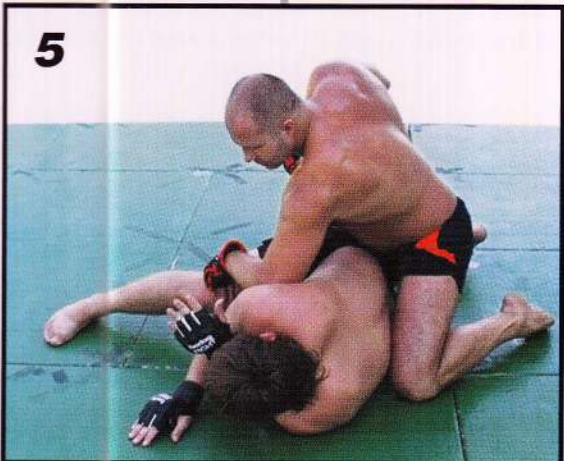


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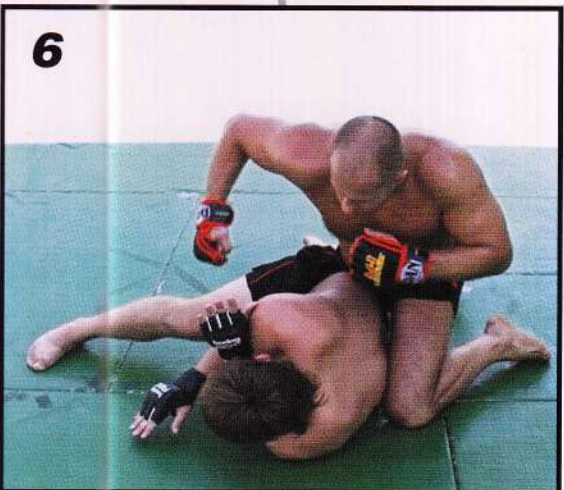
Rotating my shoulders in a clockwise direction, I chuck Kirill's right leg across my body toward my right side.

5



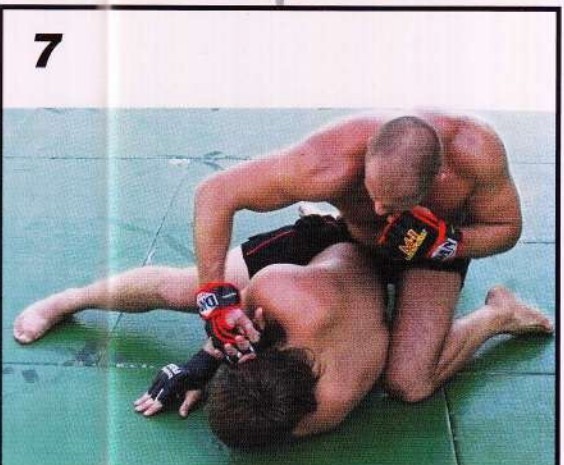
Kirill is forced onto his left side. Before he can reestablish the guard position, I slide my left knee up to his back, cock my right hand back, and pin his right leg to the mat using my left hand.

6

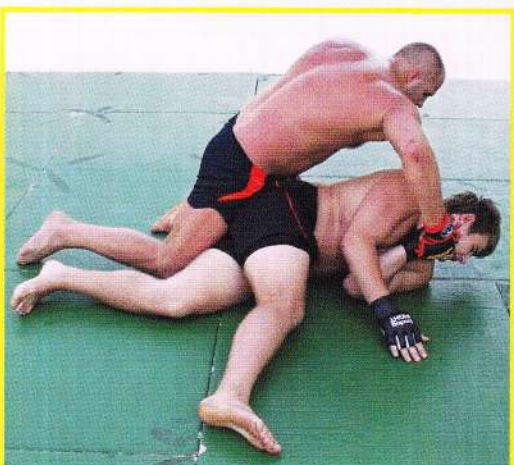
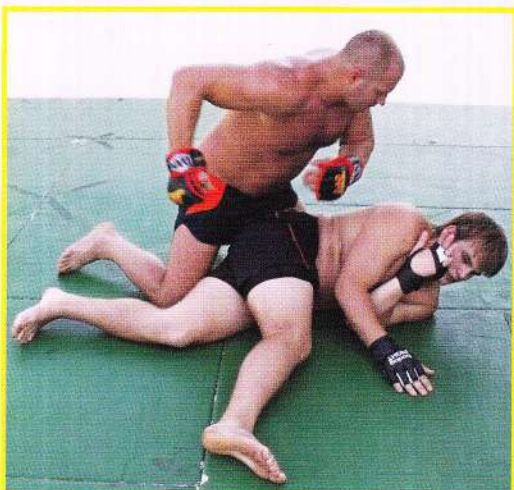
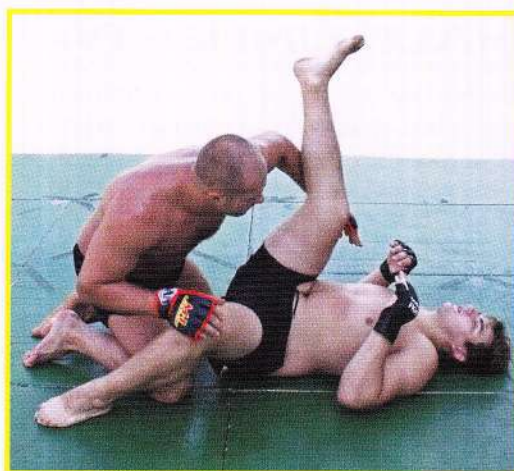


I pull my left shoulder back, rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, and throw an overhand right toward Kirill's face.

7



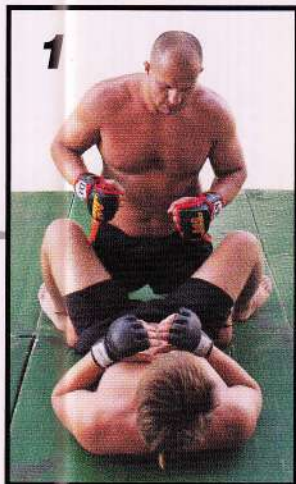
Continuing to rotate my hips and shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, I land an overhand right to Kirill's face.



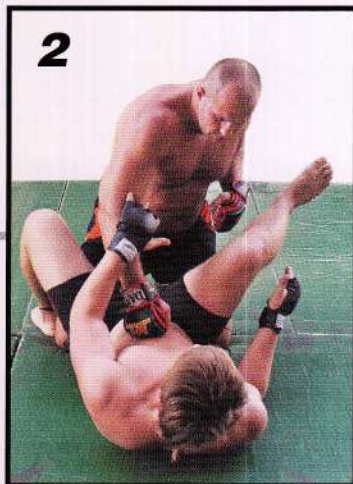


## HALF UNDERPASS TO HOOK

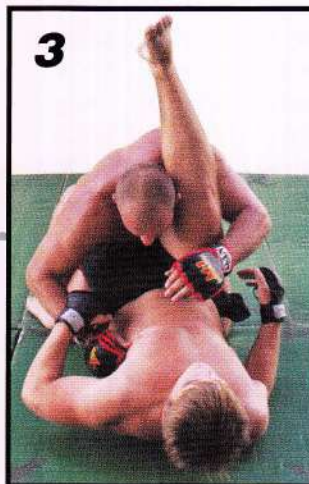
Sometimes when you hook your arm around your opponent's leg and attempt to utilize the previous half underpass, he will counter by repositioning his trapped leg over your shoulder with the goal of locking in a triangle choke. In such a scenario, this technique comes in very handy. Instead of trying to pass by throwing his leg to the side with your arm, you drive forward to stack his leg over his body. Not only does this make it difficult for your opponent to lock in the triangle, but it also allows you to force his legs to the side by simply turning your body into his trapped leg. Once you clear his legs, your hips will be primed to throw a hard hook or overhand at his face. It is important to mention that this move isn't restricted to when your opponent counters the previous half underpass—it can be utilized anytime your opponent clears a leg over your arm and attempts to lock in the triangle choke. However, if you are slow to react and your opponent manages to secure the triangle, you'll want to utilize the next technique in this section.



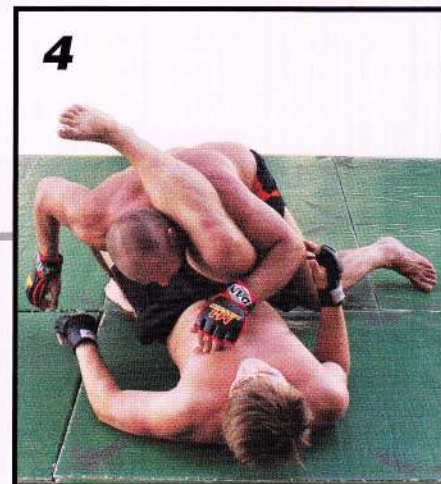
**1** I'm postured up in Kirill's open guard.



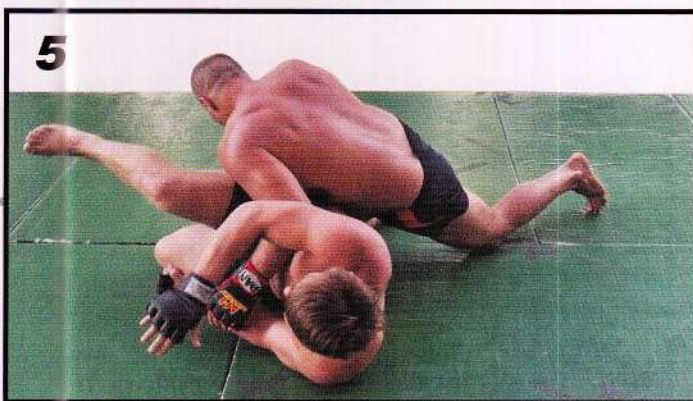
**2** As I land a left punch to Kirill's abdomen, he elevates his hips and moves his right leg in front of my left hand.



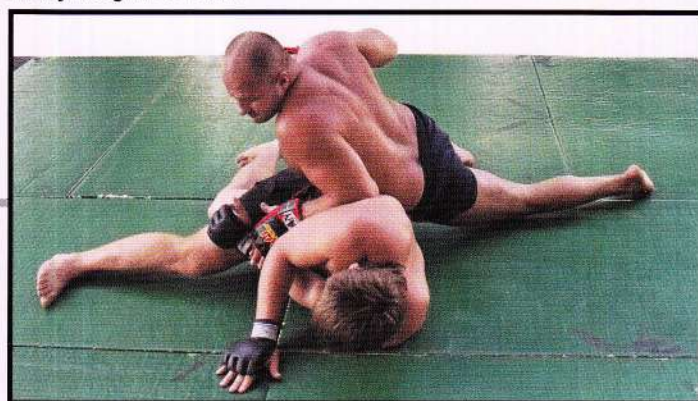
**3** Kirill throws his right leg over my left arm and shoulder in an attempt to lock in a triangle choke. To avoid the submission, I immediately throw my weight forward.



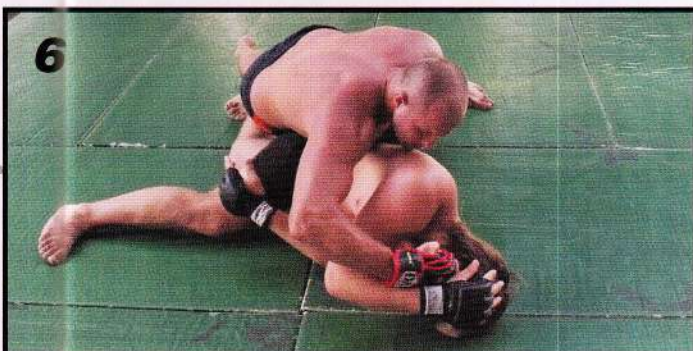
**4** I continue to stack Kirill's guard by driving my weight forward and rotating my body in a clockwise direction.



**5** Continuing to rotate my body in a clockwise direction, I sprawl my left leg back. Due to my explosive movements, Kirill's leg passes over my head and he is forced onto his left side.



Having cleared Kirill's legs and forced him onto his left side, I cock my right hand back and prepare to throw a hook at his head.

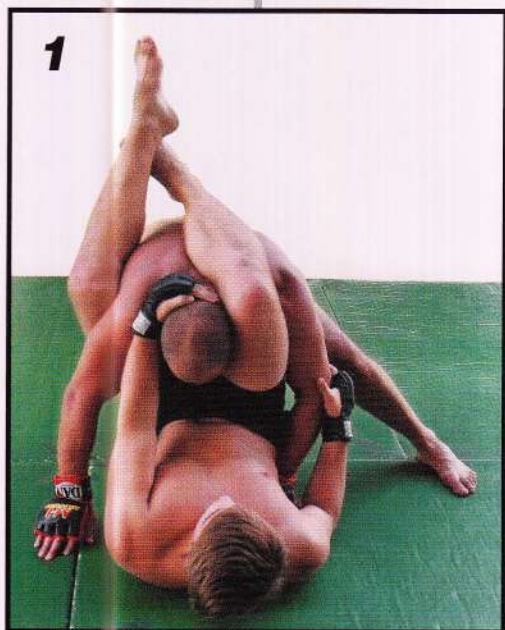


Rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction, I throw a right hook to Kirill's head.

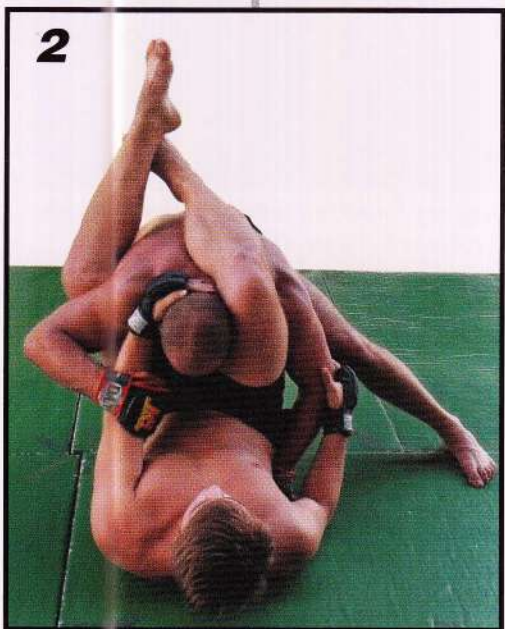
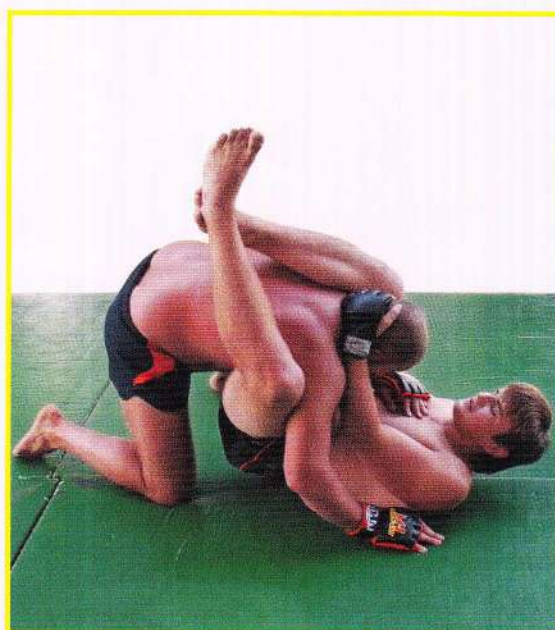


## TRIANGLE ESCAPE TO HOOK

In the previous sequence, my opponent threw a leg over my shoulder to set up the triangle choke, and I immediately countered by driving my weight forward, stacking his leg over his body, and then executing an explosive turn to clear his legs and pass his guard. This technique comes into play when you're late defending against the triangle and your opponent manages to lock his legs together and begin applying the choke. If you look at the photos below, you'll notice that my opponent is controlling my posture by gripping the back of my head with his left hand. In order to escape the triangle and pass his guard, I first have to break his grip, which I accomplish using my right hand. Once my head is free, I rotate my body in a clockwise direction just as I did in the previous pass, but instead of driving my weight forward and then turning, I execute the rotation down by his legs. This allows me to explode my head out from between my opponent's legs, as well as drive his right leg toward the mat using my left shoulder. Just as with the last two underpasses, these actions prime my hips to throw a heavy hook or overhand at my opponent's head. However, it is important to mention that this pass is usually more difficult to pull off than the others because you are already caught in a submission. The instant your opponent locks in the triangle, you'll most likely be just moments away from losing consciousness. If you don't act quickly, there is a good chance you'll be waking up on the canvas. It is also important to be extremely explosive in your actions. When you execute the turn to escape, you want to drive off your posted leg and rotate your hips and shoulders at the same time. Ideally you want to avoid this situation altogether, but that can often be difficult when throwing so many punches from your opponent's guard. If you're going to utilize ground and pound, you want to have this technique in your arsenal.

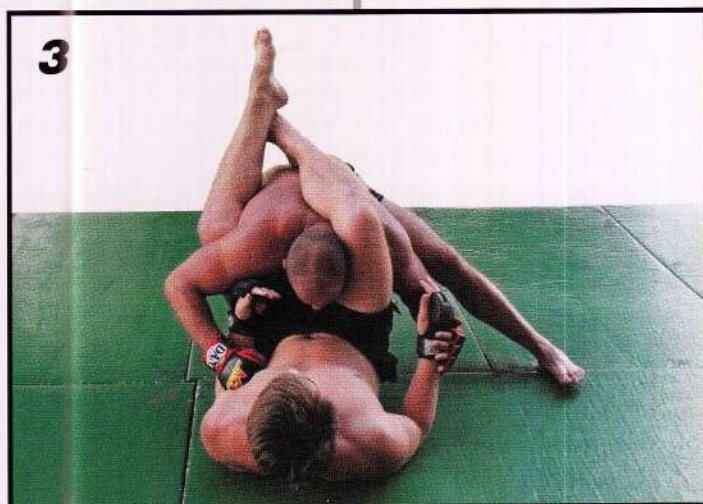


Having trapped my right arm and head between his legs, Kirill is attempting to submit me with a triangle choke. Notice how he is gripping the back of my head with his left hand to control my posture. In order to escape, I must first break his grip.

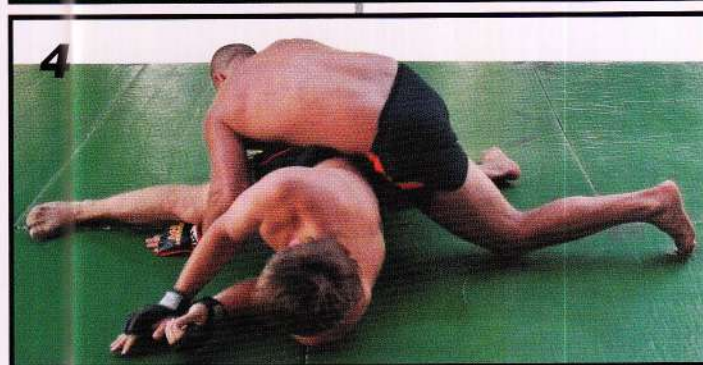


I place my right hand on the crook of Kirill's left arm, which is the weakest point on his arm, and apply downward pressure.

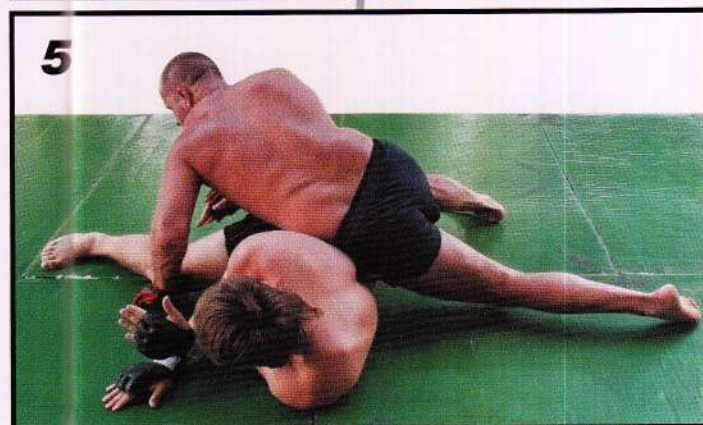




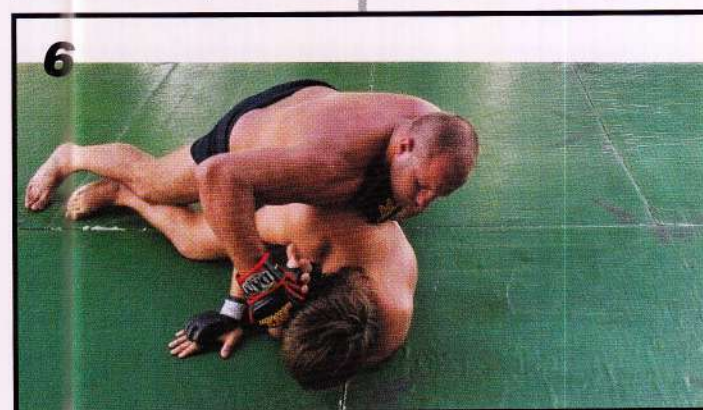
Applying downward pressure on the crook of Kirill's left arm, his arm folds and collapses to the mat, breaking his grip on my head.



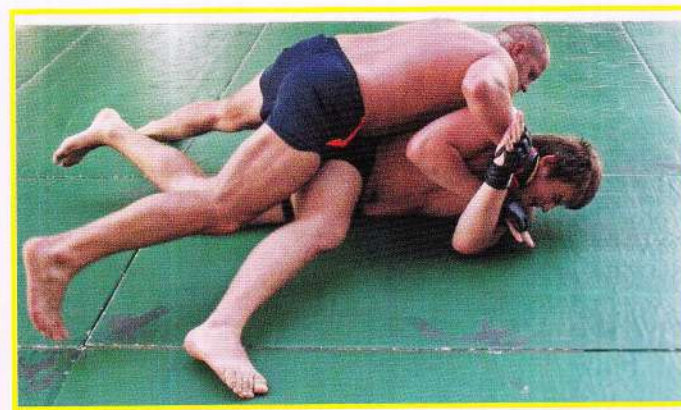
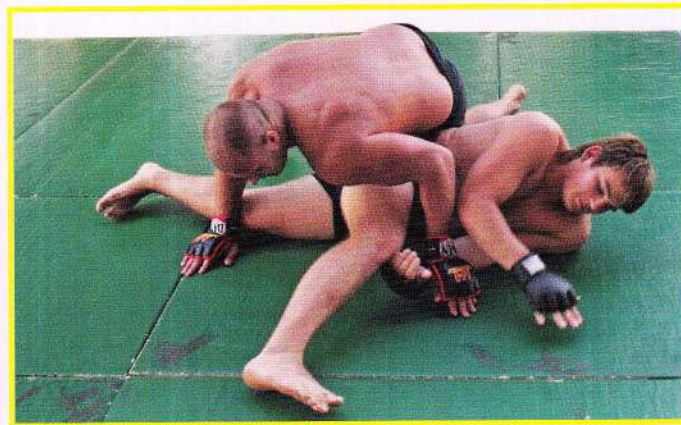
The instant I break Kirill's grip on my head, I drive off the mat with my left foot, twist my body in a clockwise direction, and drive my left shoulder toward the mat. The combination of these actions forces Kirill's legs apart and turns him onto his left side.



I post my left hand on the mat, come up onto the ball of my right foot, and sprawl my left leg back. In addition to helping me keep Kirill pinned on his side, these actions set me up to throw a right hook at his head.



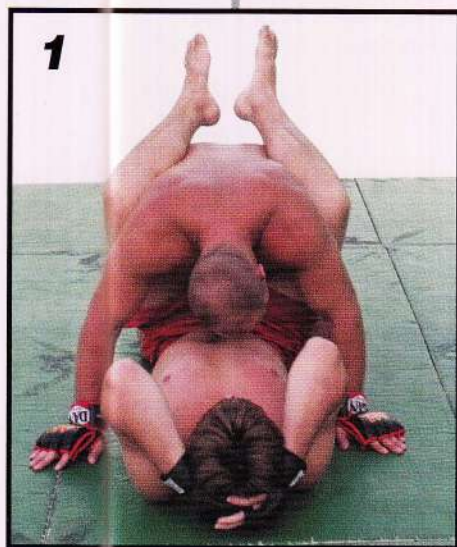
Driving off the mat with my right foot, I twist my body in a counterclockwise direction and throw a right hook at Kirill's head. It is important to notice how I float my body over his hips when I throw the strike. This allows me to harness all the energy generated by my rotation into the punch.



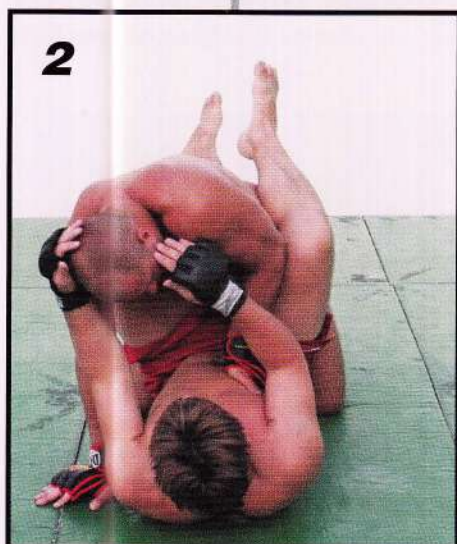


## LEG-PIN GUARD PASS TO SHOULDER LOCK

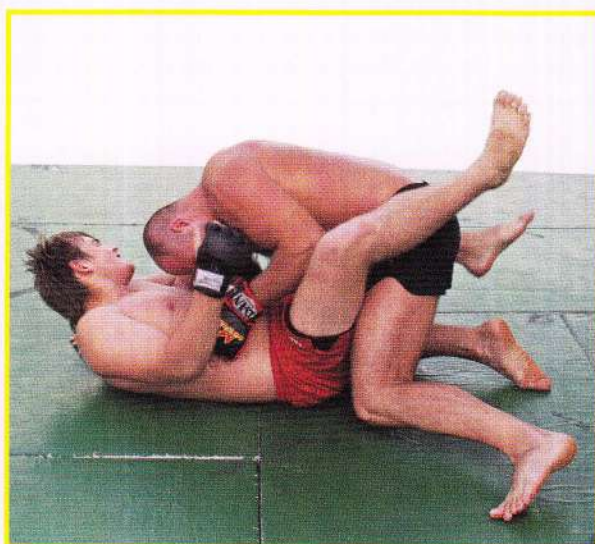
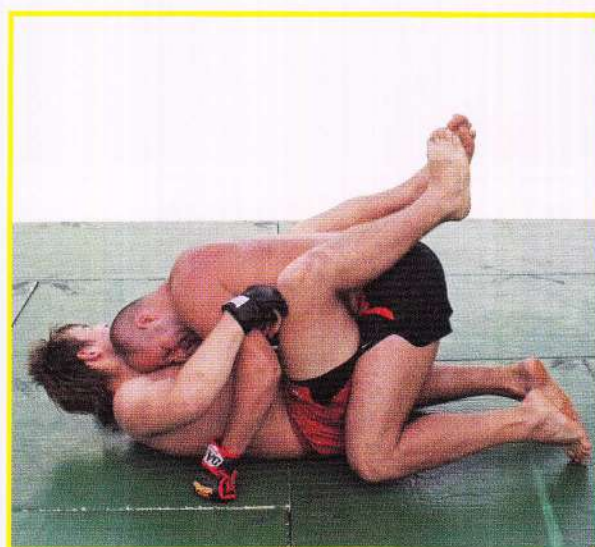
This is one of my favorite ways to pass an opponent's guard, and I've used it successfully in many fights. To begin the technique, drive an elbow into your opponent's inner thigh and force his leg to the mat. In the photos below I start in my opponent's open guard, which makes the technique easier to manage, but it can also be used while in the closed guard. The only difference is that you must find the most sensitive spot on your opponent's inner thigh with your elbow, which will cause him to unhook his feet when you apply downward pressure. Once you've forced his leg to the mat, trap it there by sliding your knee over his thigh. This gives you two options for passing. The first is to slide your free leg up between your opponent's legs, plant your knee on the opposite side of his body, and secure the mount. The second is to step your free leg over his grounded leg and secure side control, which is the option I choose below. If you look at the photos in the sequence, you'll notice that as I pass into side control I drive my forearm down into my opponent's neck. In addition to keeping his head pinned to the mat, which hinders his escape, it creates an ample amount of pain that steals his focus away from the fact that I'm passing his guard, allowing for an easier transition into side control. Once you've successfully passed into side control, immediately transitioning into a submission is usually a good option because your opponent will still be focused on how he just had his guard passed. In this scenario, I choose to circle toward my opponent's head and apply a shoulder lock. It is important to mention that for the best results, this entire sequence should be executed in one fluid movement. When done without hesitation, each attack will set you up perfectly for the next.



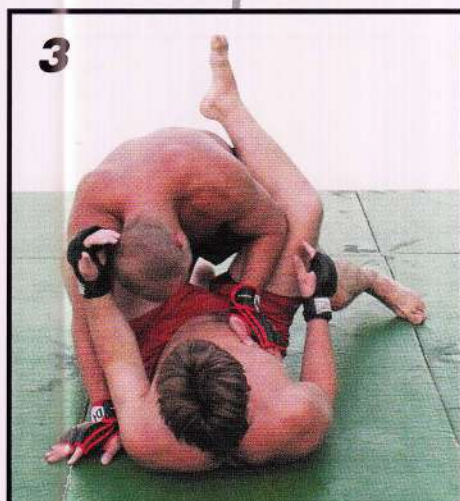
I'm in Kirill's open guard.



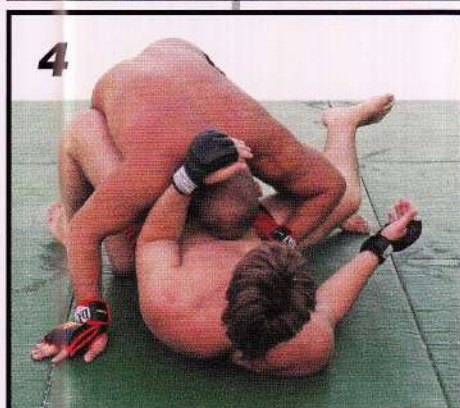
I drive the tip of my left elbow into Kirill's inner right thigh.



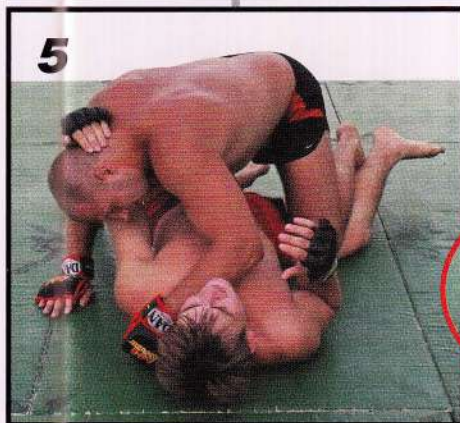




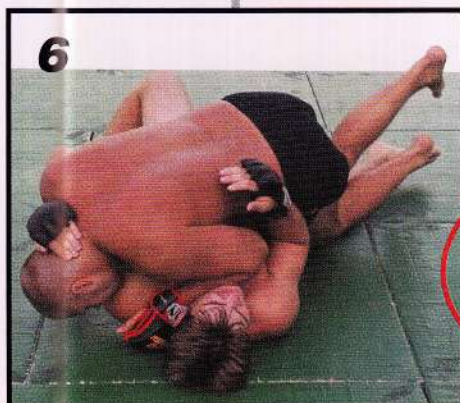
I force Kirill's right leg toward the mat by applying downward pressure to his inner right thigh using my left elbow. As I lower his leg, I post my left foot on the mat and begin sliding my left knee over the top of his right leg.



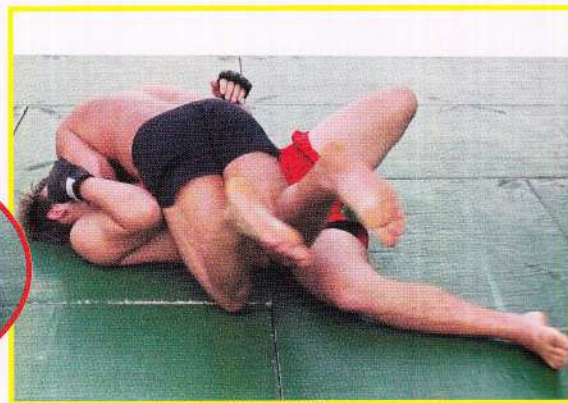
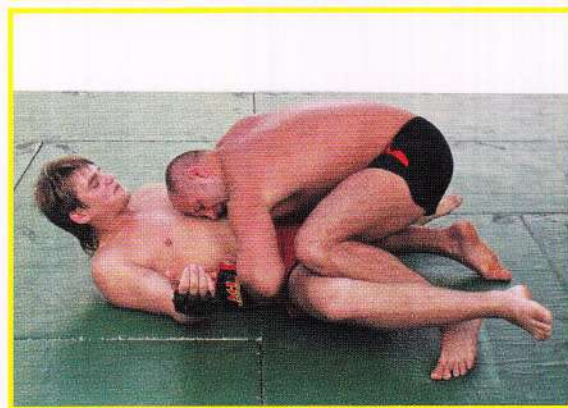
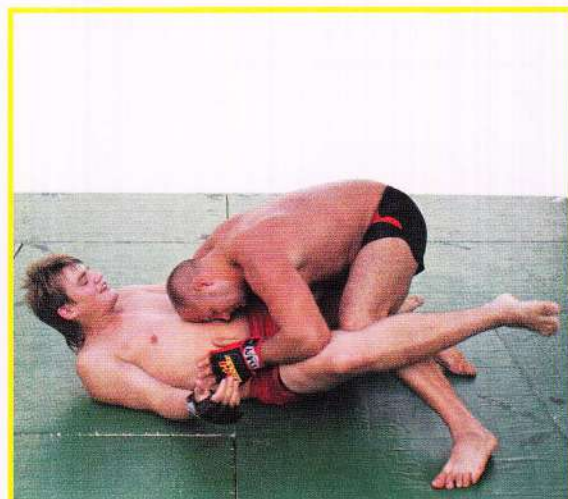
I slide my left knee over the top of Kirill's right leg and then remove my left elbow from his thigh.



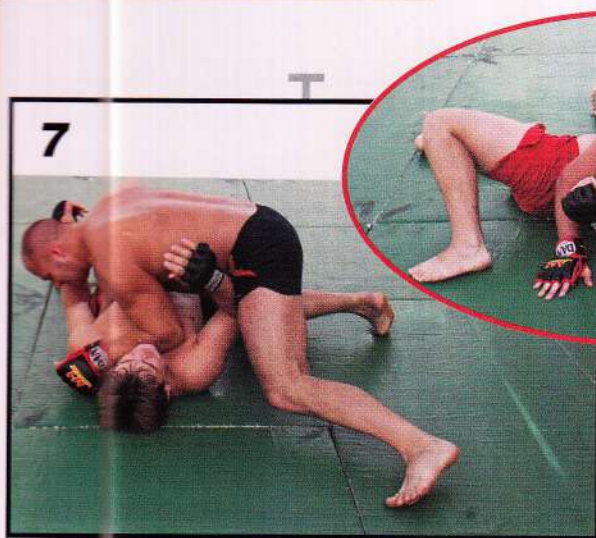
Keeping my left foot to the inside of Kirill's right leg, I drive my left knee to the mat on the outside of his right leg. Keeping his leg pinned in this manner, I place my left hand on his left shoulder and wedge the outside of my left forearm against the left side of his neck. Once accomplished, I shift my weight forward and drive my arm down into his neck. Applying this choke not only keeps his head pinned to the mat, but it also takes his attention away from the fact that I'm passing his guard.



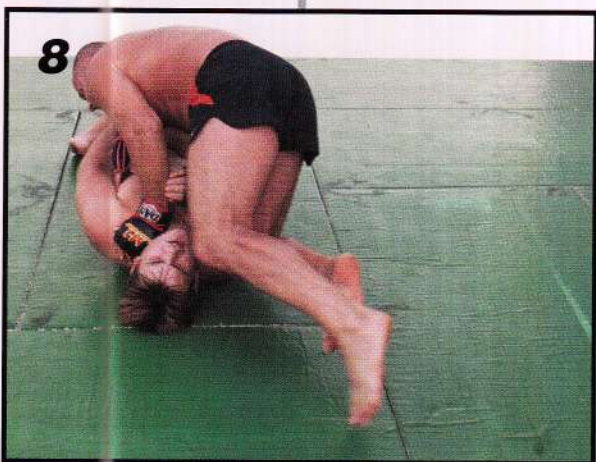
Keeping my weight distributed over my left arm, I pass both of my legs over the top of Kirill's right leg.



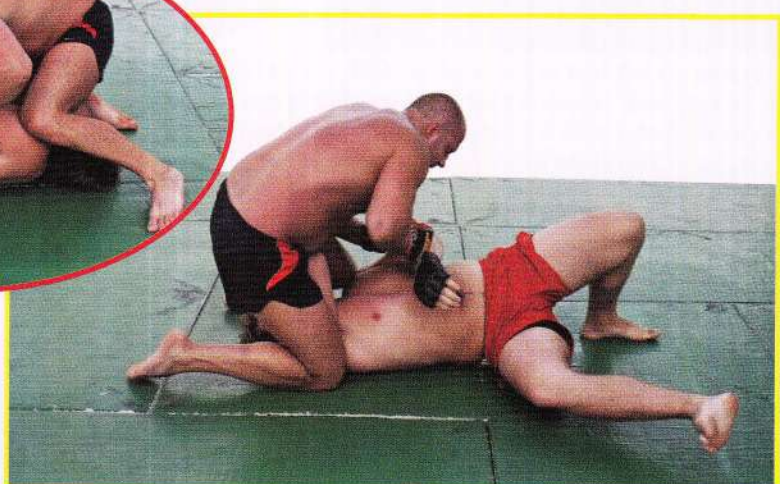
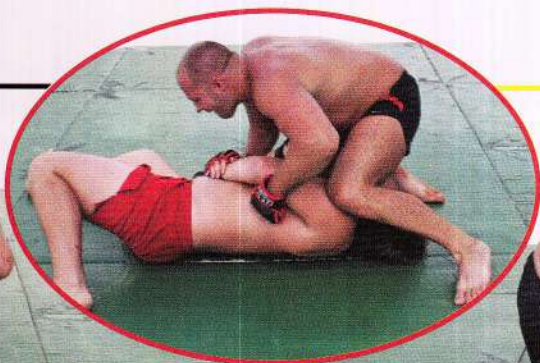
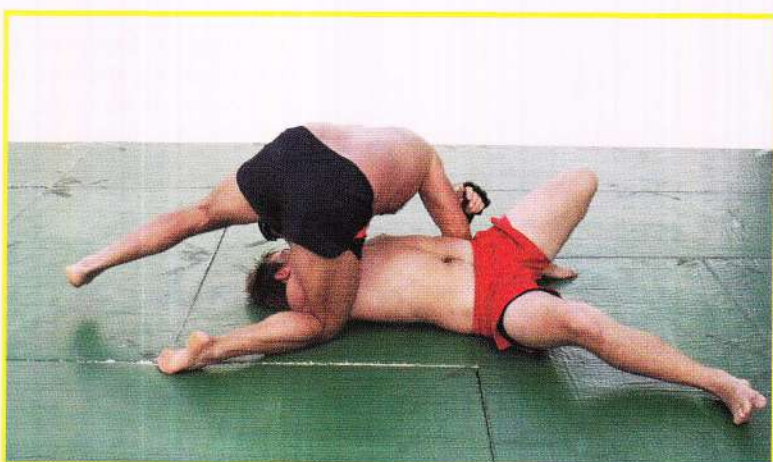




Still driving my left arm down into Kirill's neck, I pass into the side control position.

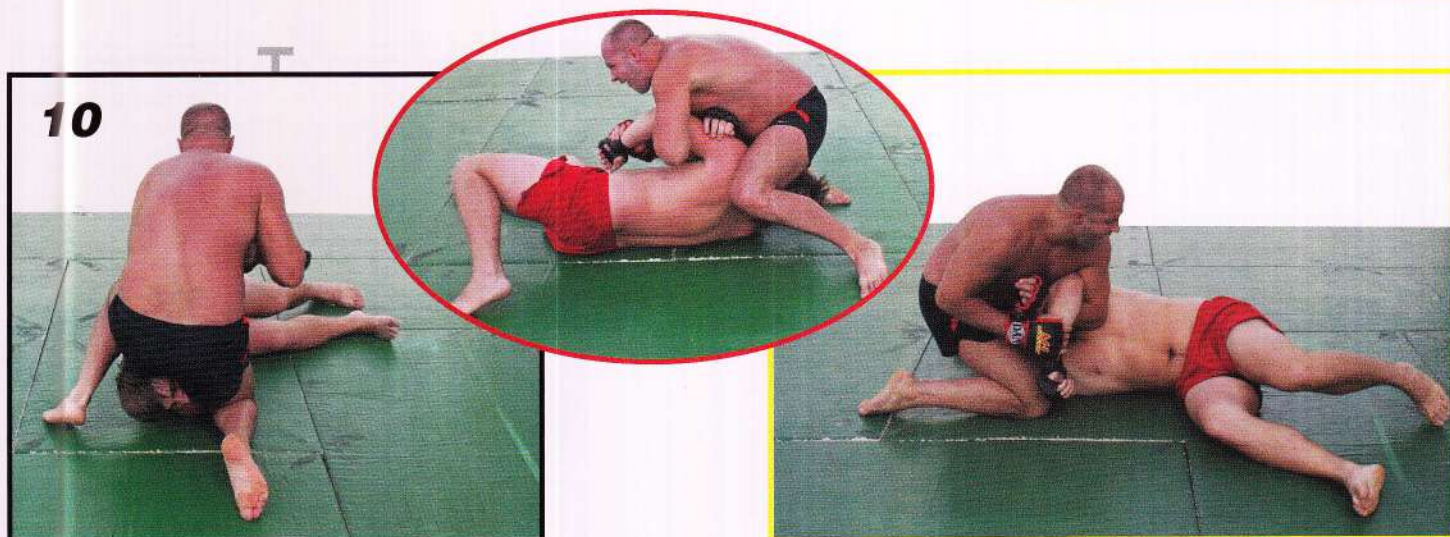


Posting my left hand on Kirill's neck, I circle my body toward his head by sliding my right knee up to his right shoulder and stepping my left foot toward the left side of his head.



I plant my left foot on the mat on the left side of Kirill's head. The instant I secure this position, he rolls onto his right shoulder in an attempt to escape, but his action makes his left arm vulnerable to a shoulder lock. To set up the submission, I grip his left wrist with my right hand and pin his arm to his chest. At the same time, I begin digging my left hand underneath his left elbow.

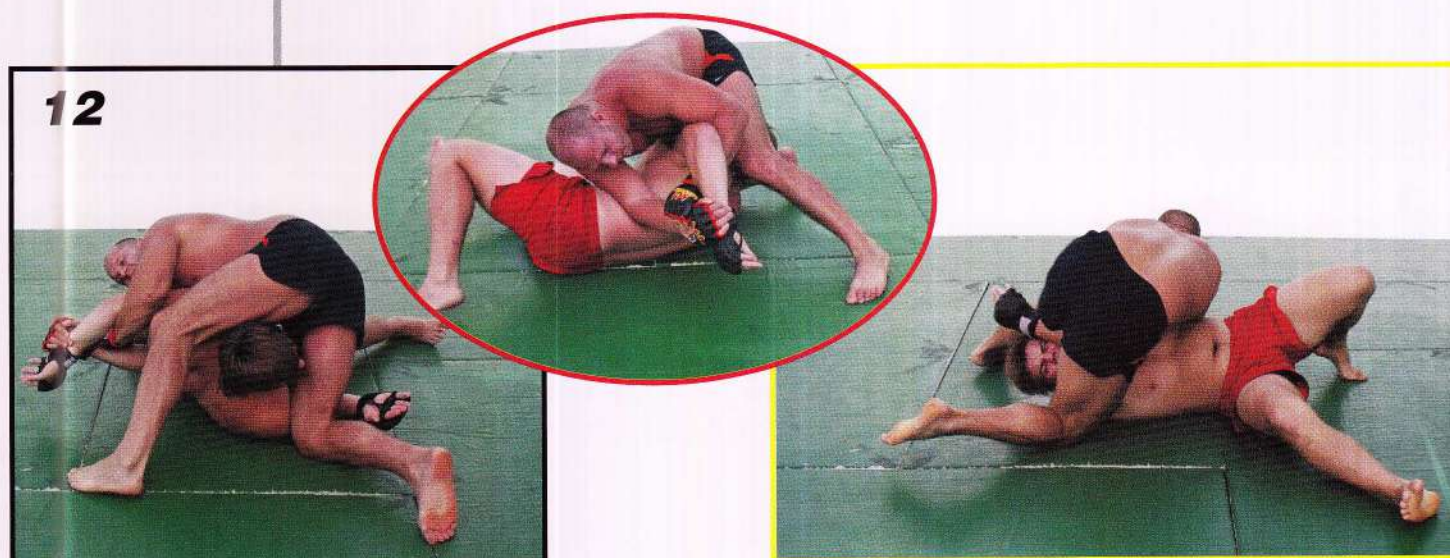




I dig my left hand underneath Kirill's left elbow and then hook the crook of my arm around the crook of his arm.



To secure my hold on Kirill's left arm, I grab my right wrist with my left hand. Once accomplished, I put a tremendous amount of pressure on his left shoulder by rotating my shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, forcing his left elbow toward his legs using my left arm, and forcing his left hand toward his head using my right hand.

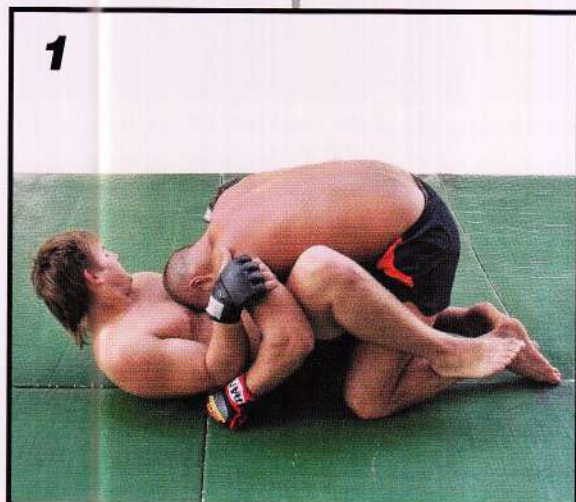


Continuing to force Kirill's left elbow toward his legs and his left hand toward his head, I finish the submission by driving my right shoulder toward the mat on the left side of his body. It is important to notice how I twist my entire body to apply the submission. This places a tremendous amount of pressure on my opponent's arm—if he doesn't tap quickly, his arm will break.

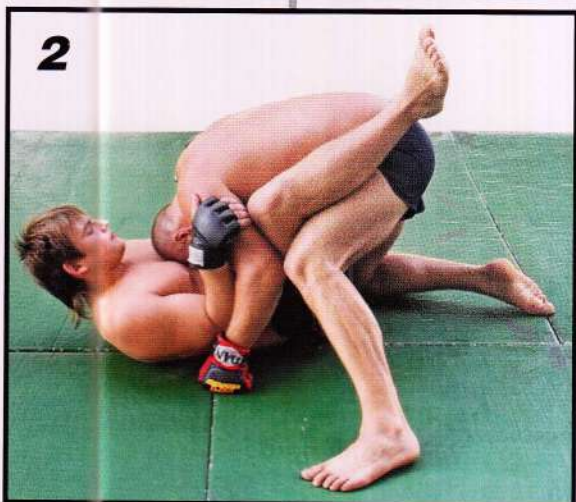


## LEG-PIN GUARD PASS TO MOUNT TRANSITION

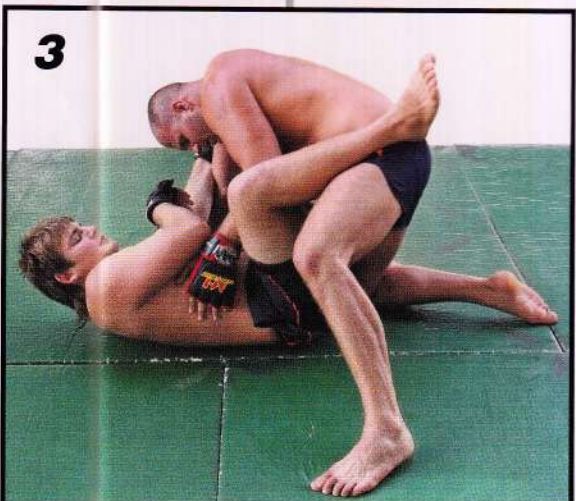
In this technique you pin your opponent's leg to the mat just as you did in the last, but instead of transitioning into side control, you climb into the mount. Both positions are very dominant, and deciding which transition to make should be based upon your personal preference and what you think will work best against your opponent. However, this particular mount transition can come in handy when you attempt to move into side control and your opponent counters by turning into you. Instead of letting him achieve his goal, which is usually to recapture you between his legs, you step over his body and into the mount. Once accomplished, you have a number of different striking and submission options, many of which will be covered in the mount section later in the book. In this particular sequence, I opt to employ ground and pound.



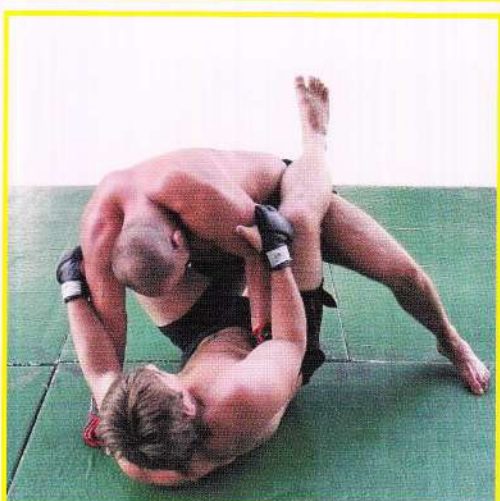
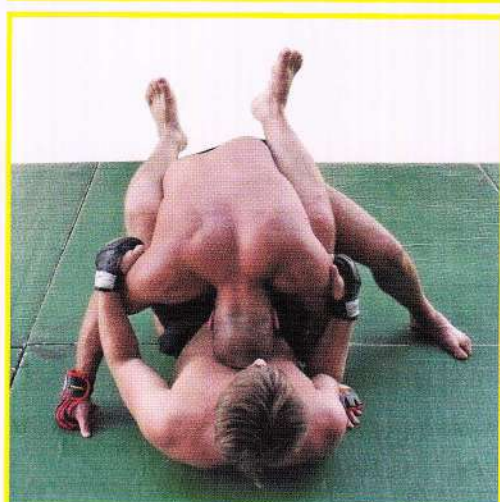
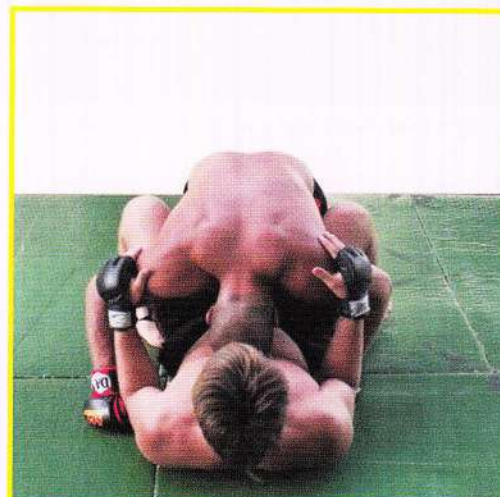
I'm in Kirill's open guard.



To make it difficult for Kirill to cross his feet and trap me in his closed guard, I post my left foot on the mat by his right hip.



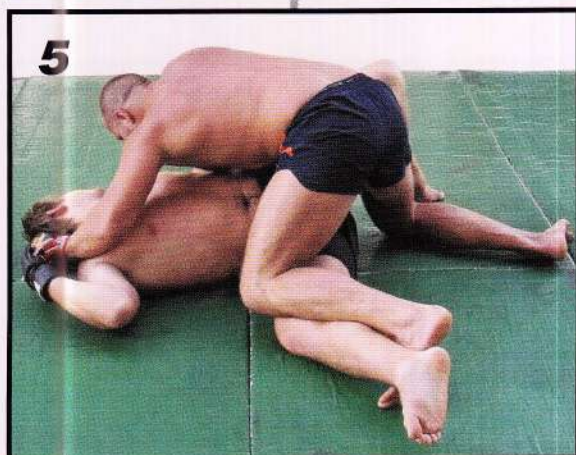
I place the tip of my left elbow against the inside of Kirill's right thigh and apply downward pressure.



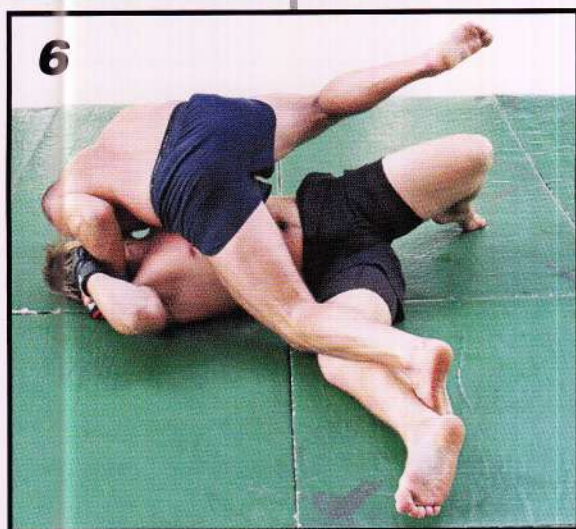




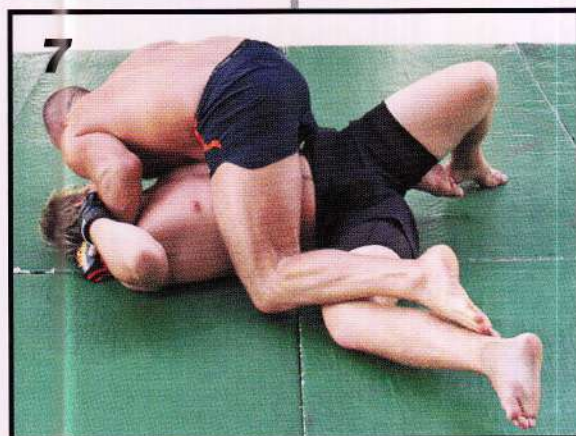
As I drive Kirill's right leg toward the mat using my left elbow, I place my left knee over his right leg.



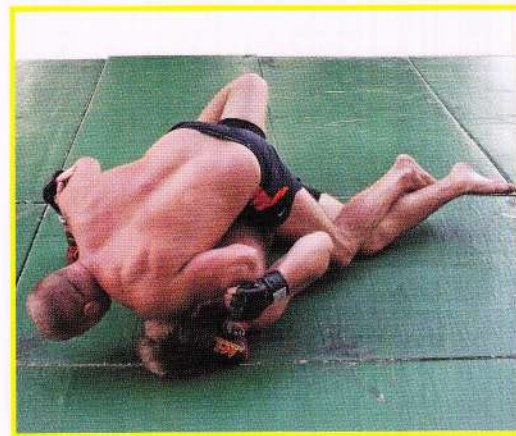
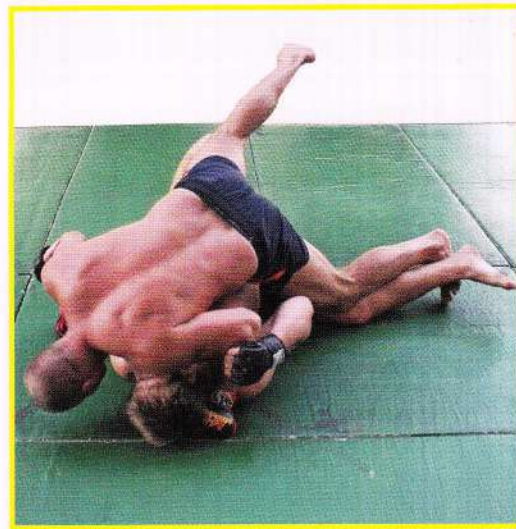
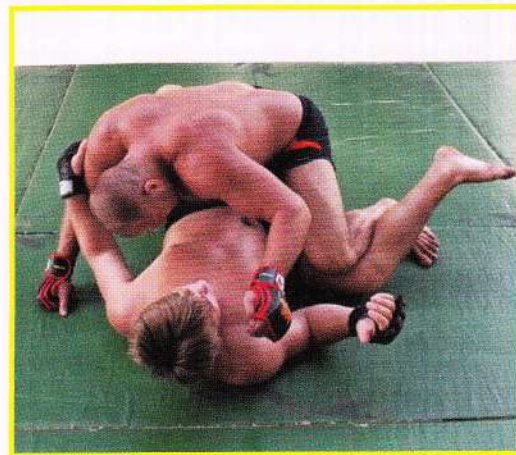
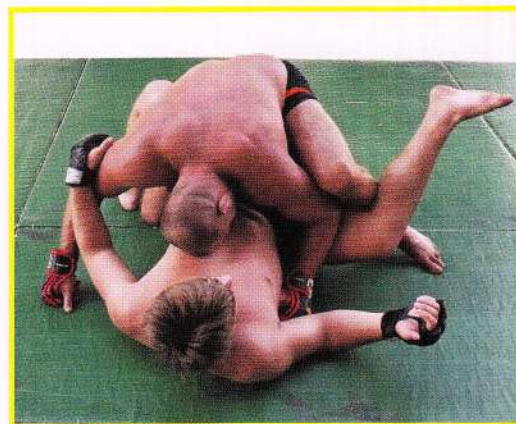
I place my left knee on the mat. With my foot on the inside of his right leg and my knee on the outside, I have successfully pinned his leg to the mat, making it difficult for him to keep me trapped in his guard. Immediately I place my left hand next to the right side of his head.



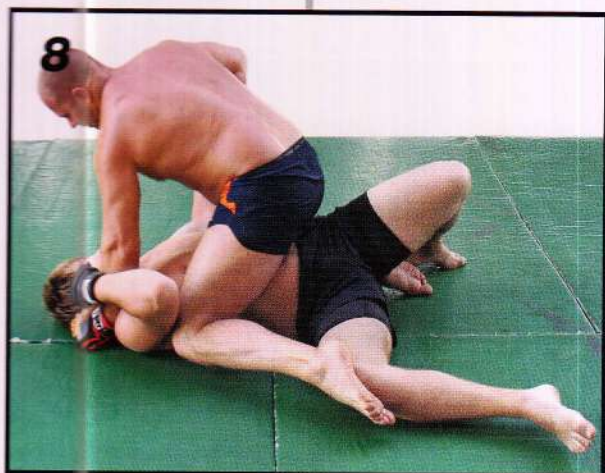
Keeping Kirill's right leg pinned to the mat using my left shin, I place my left hand on the mat next to Kirill's head and step my right leg over the top of his left leg.



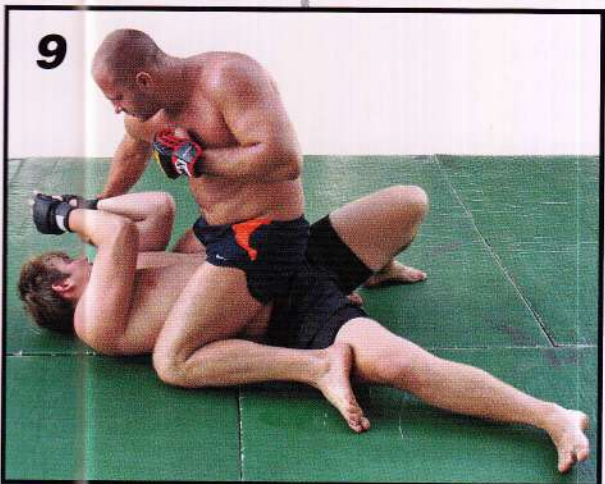
Keeping my weight distributed over Kirill's torso, I place my right knee on the mat on the left side of his body.



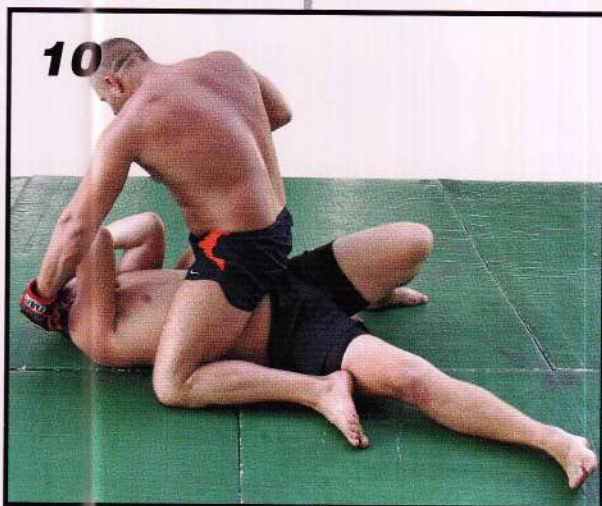




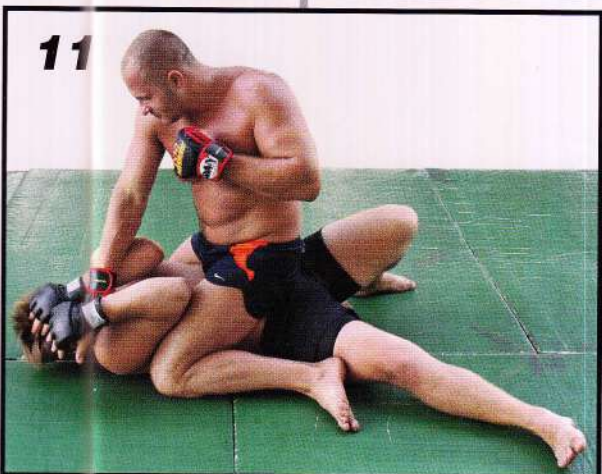
Having secured the mount position, I push off the mat with my left arm and posture up.



Kirill has his guard up to protect his face. To get around this barrier, I throw a right hook at the left side of his head.



I continue my assault by throwing a left hook at the right side of Kirill's head.

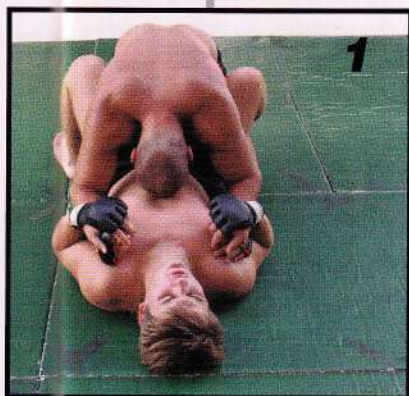


Kirill spreads his arms to protect the sides of his head. Immediately I throw a straight right cross at his chin.

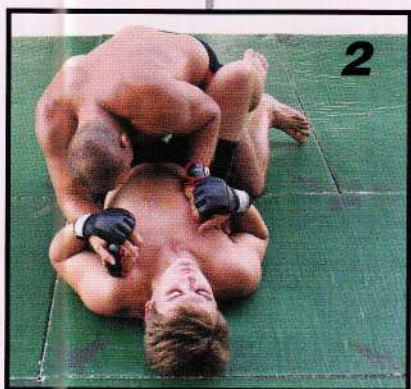
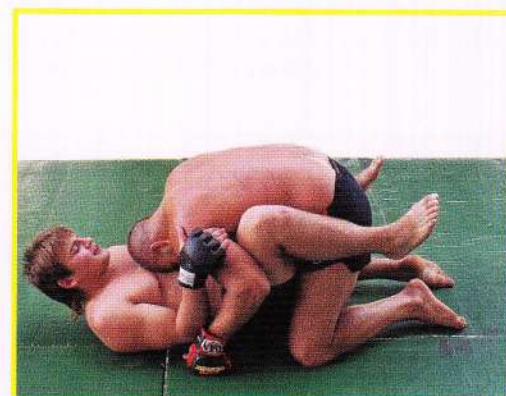
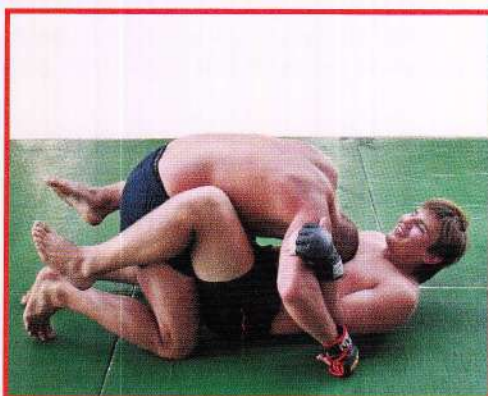


## FOOT LOCK

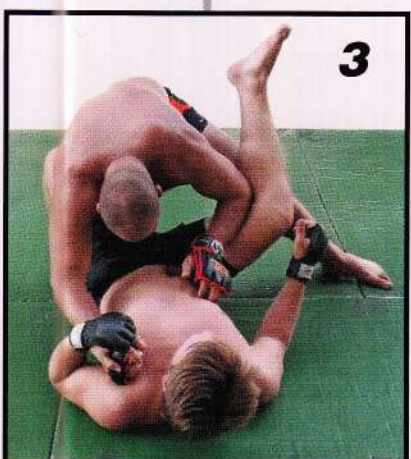
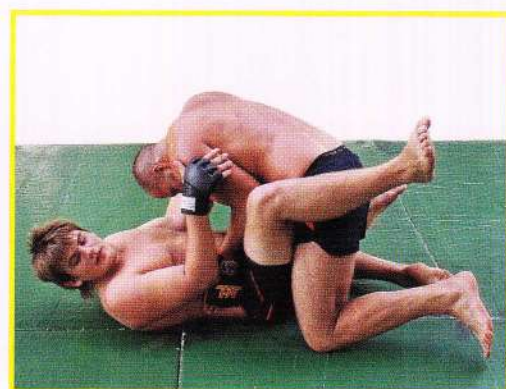
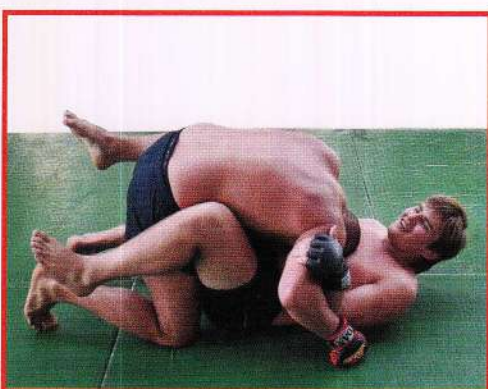
In this sequence I demonstrate how to execute a foot lock off a leg-pin guard pass, but the submission can also be applied anytime you're standing in your opponent's guard with one of his legs tucked up into your armpit, which happens frequently off throws and takedowns. To secure a foot lock, pick one of your opponent's legs to attack and then wrap your arm around his calf, pinch his thigh between your knees, and sit your butt straight down to the mat. If you fall back instead of sitting straight down, your opponent will be able to use your backward momentum to sit upright and possibly escape the submission. Once you've sat down, immediately roll onto your side. If you have your opponent's right foot trapped, roll onto your left side. If you have his left foot trapped, roll onto your right side. This allows you to thrust your hips into his leg and arch back, which puts an immense amount of pressure on his foot. It is also important to limit your opponent's mobility while executing the submission to prevent his escape. This can be managed in two steps. First, hook your grounded leg underneath your opponent's free leg. Second, hook your elevated leg over the top of your opponent's trapped leg. When done properly, your opponent will have a very difficult time rolling, which is a common defense for this submission.



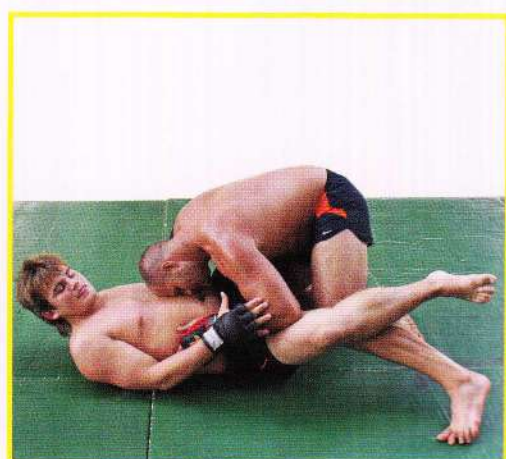
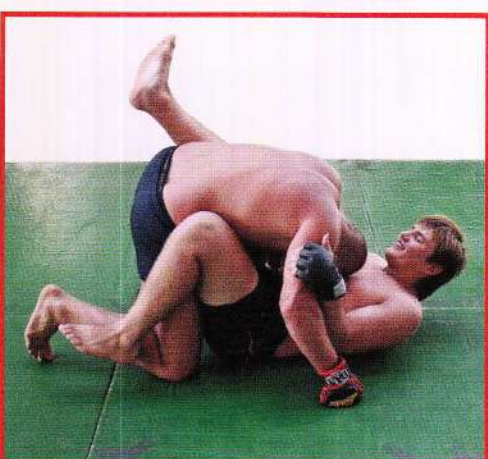
Kirill has me broken down in his open guard.



I drive the tip of my left elbow into Kirill's inner right thigh.

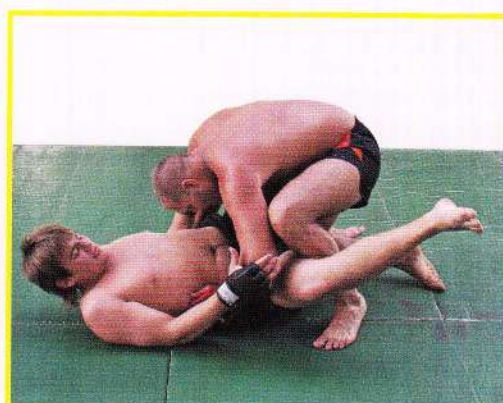
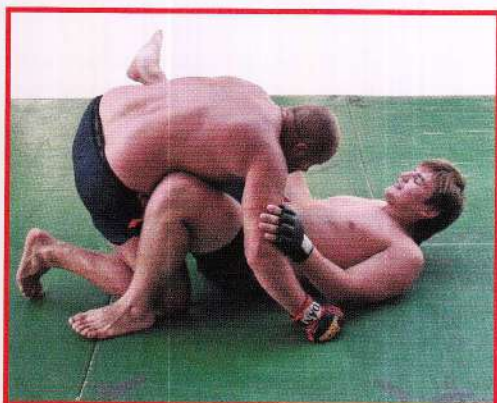
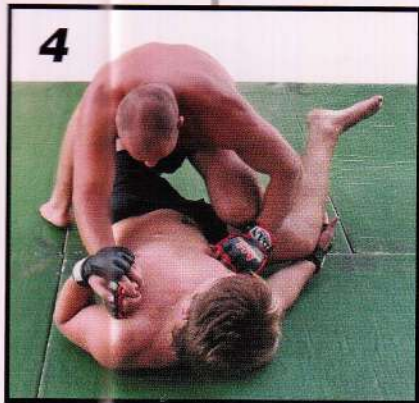


I drive Kirill's right leg toward the mat by applying downward pressure to his inner right thigh using my left elbow. At the same time, I post my left foot on the mat and begin sliding my left knee to the inside of his right leg.



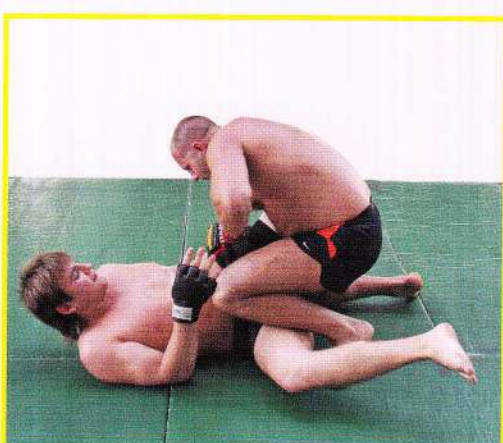
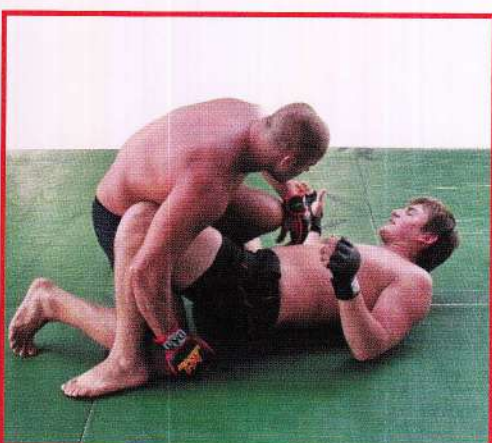
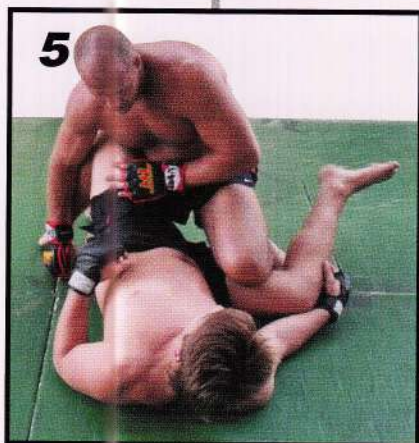


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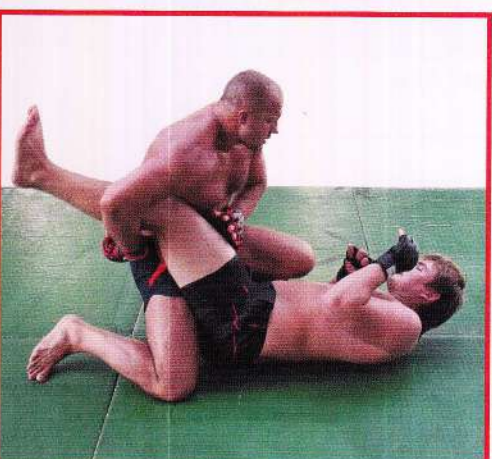
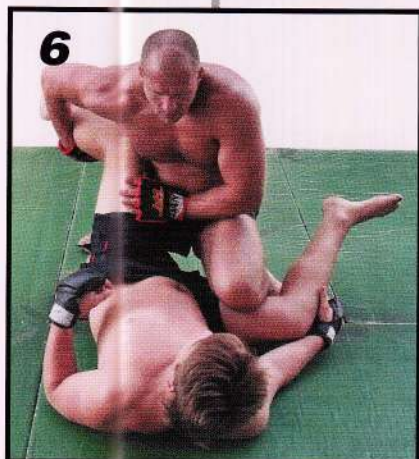
I slide my left knee over Kirill's right leg and then remove my elbow from his inner thigh.

5



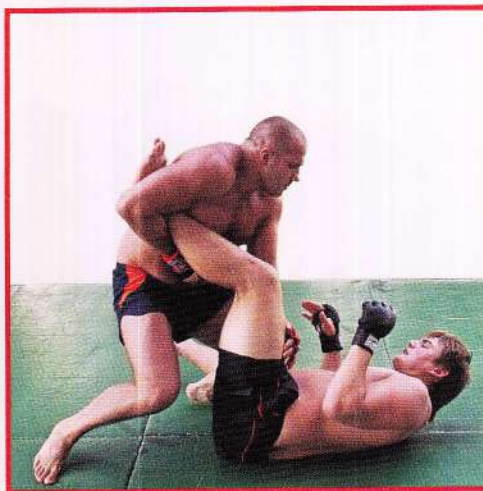
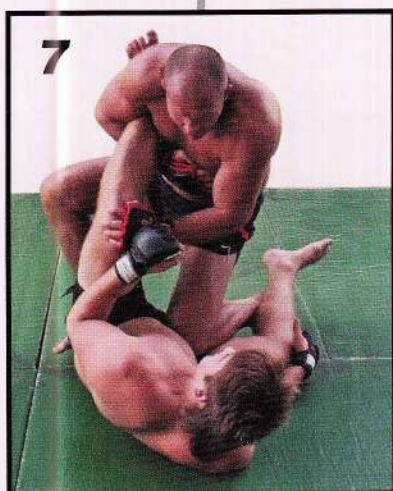
I place my left knee on Kirill's right thigh. With my left foot on the inside of his right leg and my knee on the outside, his leg is pinned to the mat. Once accomplished, I posture up and slide my right arm down to the outside of his left leg.

6

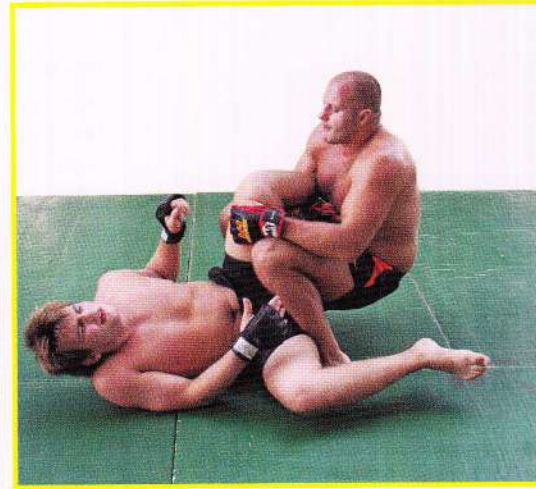
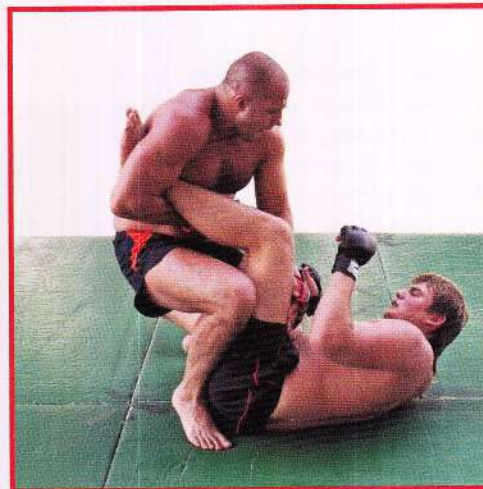
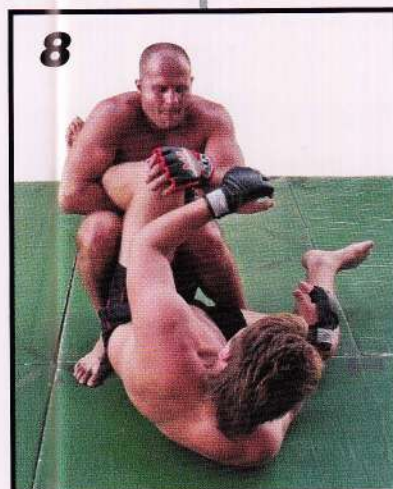


I wrap my right arm around Kirill's left leg and pull it up into my armpit.

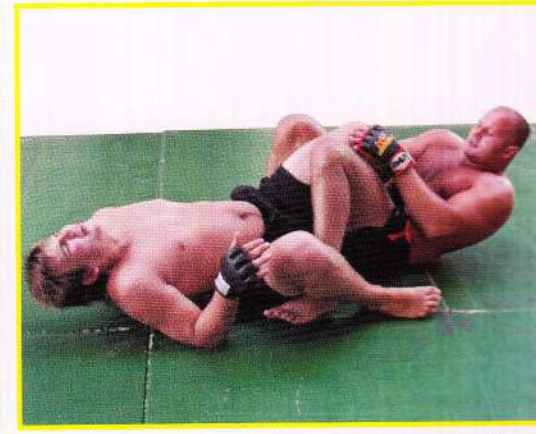
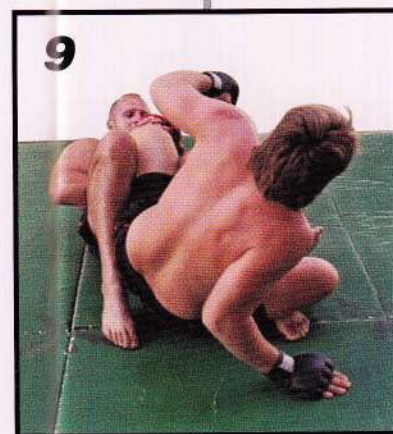




Keeping Kirill's right leg pinned to the mat using my left leg, I post my right foot on the mat and slide my right arm down to his left ankle. It is important to mention that I'm angling my right arm so that the inside of my wrist is cutting into his Achilles tendon.

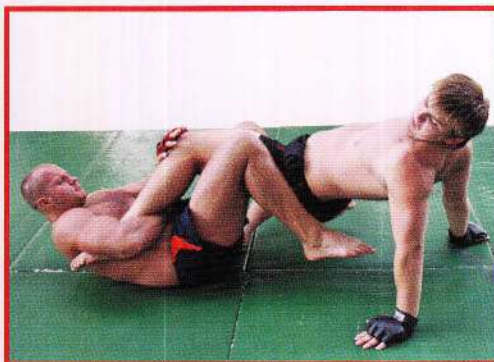
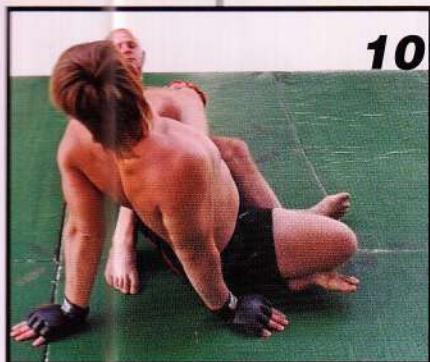


I plant my right foot underneath Kirill's left buttock.

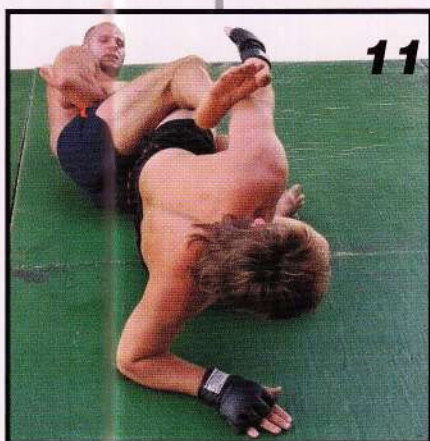


Maintaining a strong grip on Kirill's left ankle using my right arm, I sit my butt straight down to the mat. It is important to note that if you fall backward instead of sitting straight down, you'll not only create too much space between you and your opponent, but he will also be able to use your backward momentum to sit upright and assume the top position.

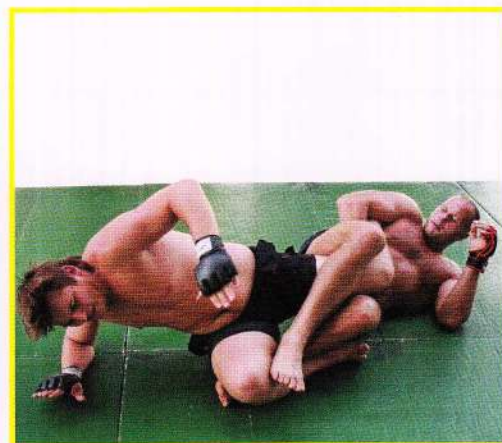
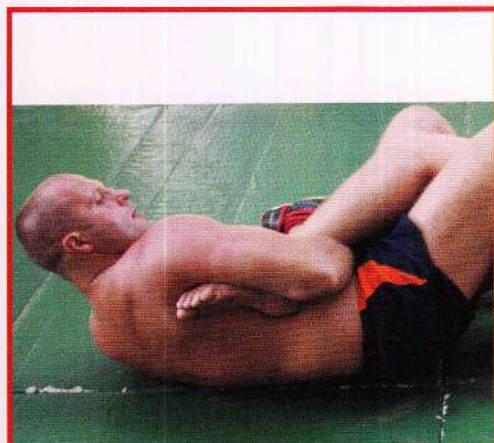
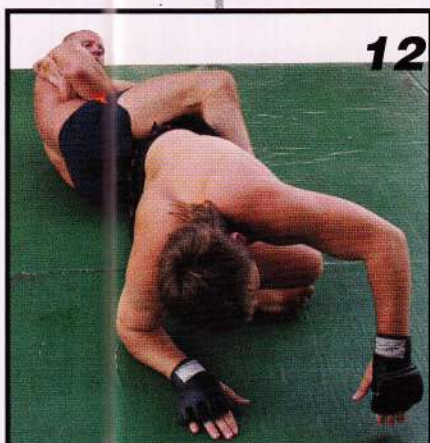
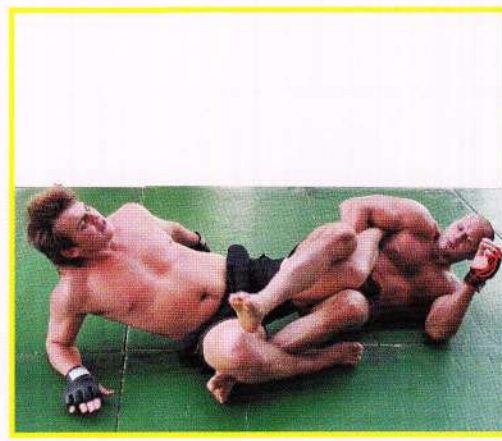




As I drop to my back, Kirill elevates his hips off the mat in an attempt to relieve the pressure being placed upon his foot. To prevent him from climbing up to his knees, I hook my left instep underneath his right leg.



The instant I come down onto my back, I roll onto my left side and throw my right leg over the top of Kirill's left leg. This prevents him from sitting up and then defending against the submission by straightening his trapped leg.



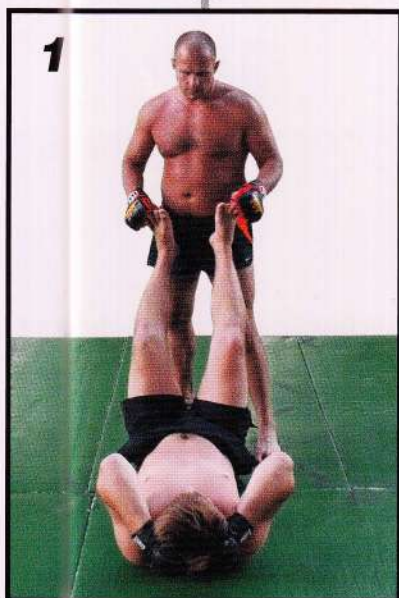
I thrust my hips into Kirill's left leg, arch backward, and pull the inside of my right wrist into his Achilles tendon. The combination of these actions rips the tendons stretching across the top of Kirill's foot and puts a tremendous amount of pressure on his ankle.



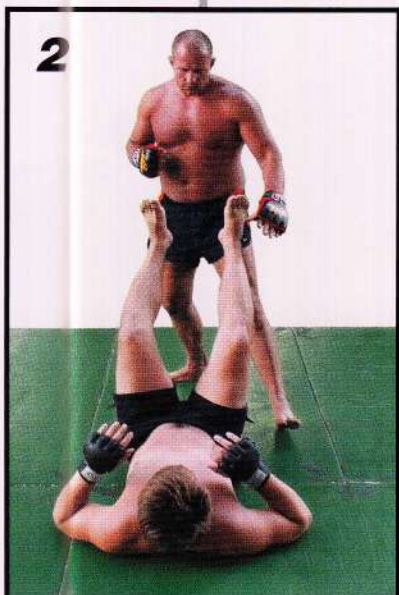
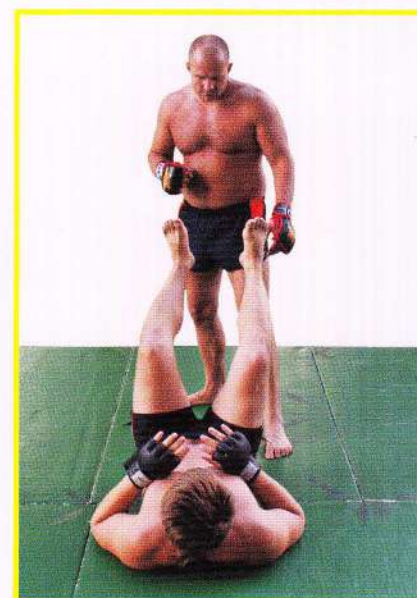
## STANDING PASS TO OVERHAND

This is one of the primary techniques that I'll utilize when standing over a downed opponent. Instead of employing a fancy guard pass, I'll slap my opponent's legs to one side and then come down with a heavy overhand punch. Although it's a simple technique, it's highly effective for several reasons. First, it's a very safe technique to utilize because with your opponent's legs off to the side, you're in little danger of getting caught in a submission. Second, the motion of throwing your opponent's legs to the side primes your hips to throw a very powerful punch that can cause serious damage. Third, as you throw your punch, your opponent will most likely be focused on getting his legs back in front of you to reestablish the guard position instead of focusing on blocking your strike. As long as you execute the entire technique in one fluid motion, your chances of being successful with it are high. Once you land the strike, usually one of two things will happen. If your opponent is quick, he might be able to sneak a leg in front of your body, which could potentially allow him to reestablish the guard. In such a scenario, I'll simply stand back up and use the same technique. Unlike most moves, I've found this one to work over and over again, even against skilled jiu-jitsu practitioners. However, the ideal situation is to land in side control because it allows you to continue with your ground and pound assault or apply a submission.

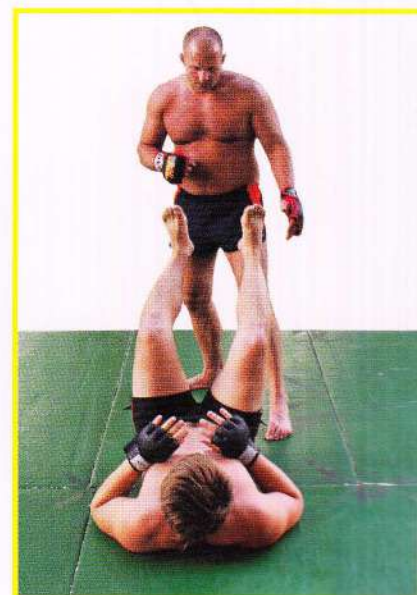
In the sequence below, I demonstrate two methods for dropping down with the overhand punch. In the column on the left, you drop your knee to the mat prior to throwing the punch, and in the column on the right, you throw the punch and then drop your knee to the mat. Both options are equally as efficient.



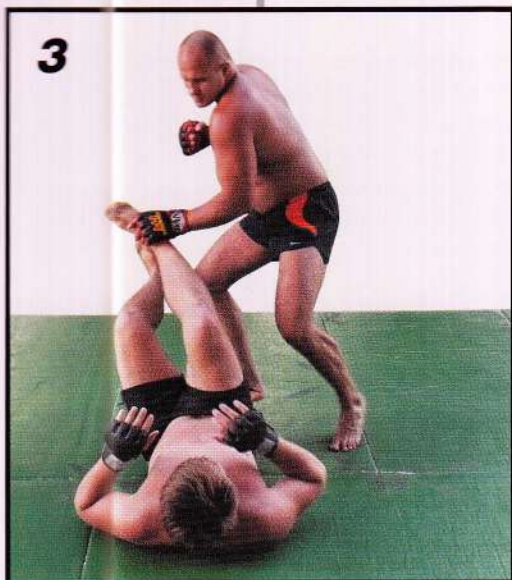
I'm standing above Kirill, searching for a way to pass his guard.



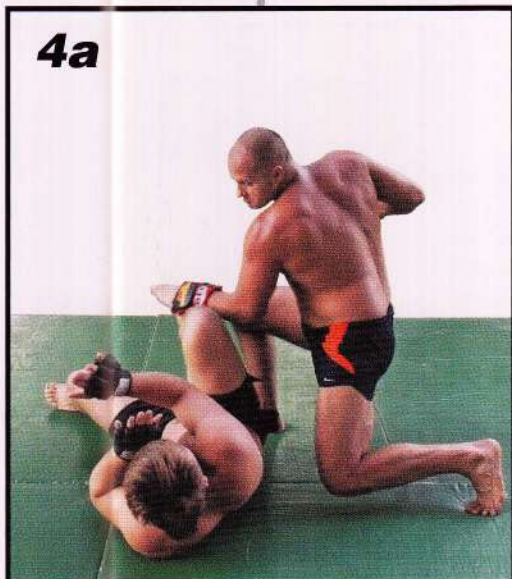
I reach my left hand toward Kirill's right leg.





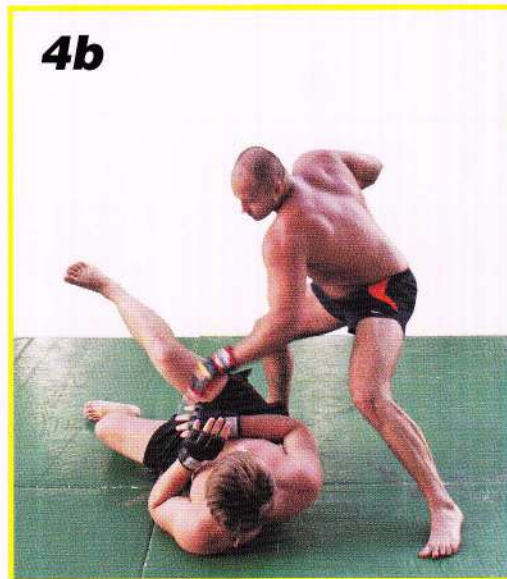
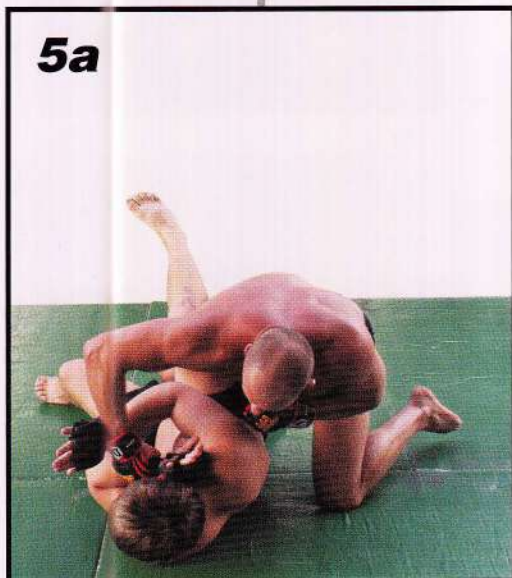
**3**

I grab Kirill's right foot with my left hand, rotate my hips and shoulders in a clockwise direction, and throw his legs toward my right side. Notice how my rotation has primed my hips for the overhand right.

**4a**

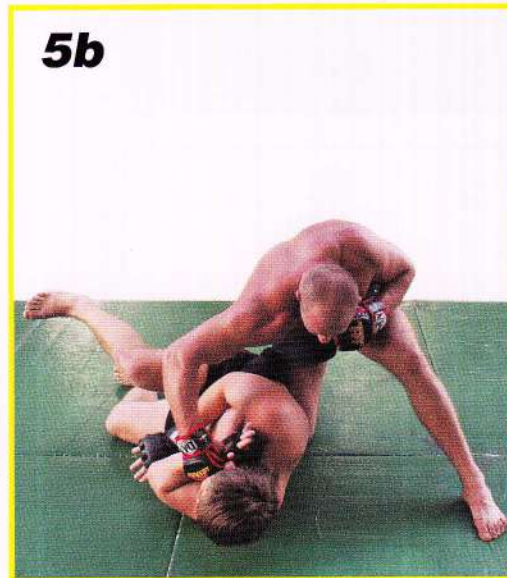
4a—Having cleared Kirill's legs using my left hand, I drop down to my left knee and prepare to throw an overhand right at his face. Notice how I've kept my hips spring-loaded as I dropped down.

4b—Having slapped Kirill's legs aside using my left hand, I step my left foot toward his head. Notice how I've kept my hips loaded for the punch.

**4b****5a**

5a—Dropping down onto my left knee, I twist my body in a counterclockwise direction and throw an overhand right to Kirill's face. From here, I can continue to employ ground and pound or establish the side control position and work for a submission.

5b—Dropping down onto my right knee, I rotate my body in a counterclockwise direction and throw an overhand right at Kirill's face. From here, I can continue to employ ground and pound or establish the side control position and work for a submission.

**5b**

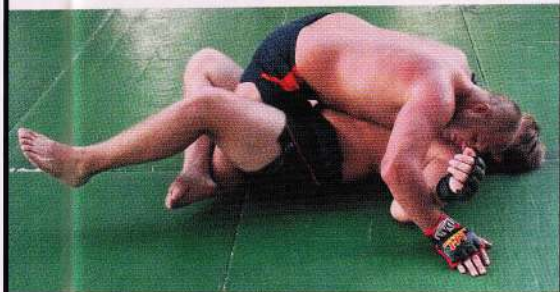


## HALF GUARD TO KNEE BAR

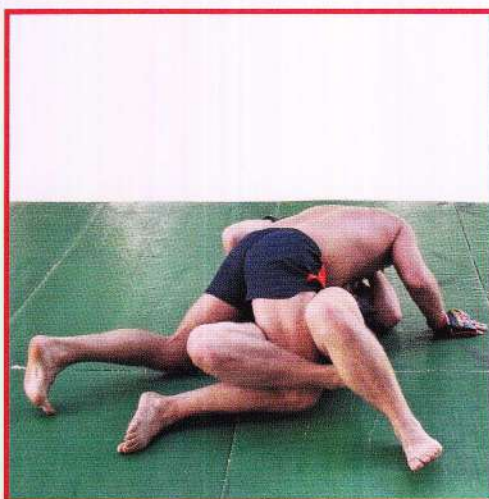
When you're in your opponent's half guard, applying a knee bar is usually a viable option. To set it up, I like to posture up and throw several hard punches at my opponent's face. The instant he brings his arms up to shield his head, I spin my upper body toward his legs, step my free leg over his body, capture his far leg between my legs, fall to my side, and lock in the knee bar. The key to success with this technique is making a fluid rotation over your opponent's body. If you hesitate, he will realize your intentions and utilize an escape. To help you along this path, it's best to conclude your series of strikes with a hook because it primes your hips for the rotation. If he has your right leg trapped, finish with a right hook. If he has your left leg trapped, finish with a left hook.

At the end of the sequence, I demonstrate two methods for finishing the knee bar. In the first option, I apply the submission while lying on my side. This is ideal because you have the freedom to really thrust your hips into your opponent's leg and arch back, which allows you to put an immense amount of pressure on his knee. However, finishing the submission on your side can be difficult when your opponent attempts to escape by rolling onto his belly. If he makes it up to his knees, you won't have the proper angle to attack his leg. As a result, I demonstrate how to adjust to your opponent's positioning by rolling onto your back in the second finishing option. Applying the submission from your back won't give you the same finishing percentage as when you're on your side, but it's always good to give it a try.

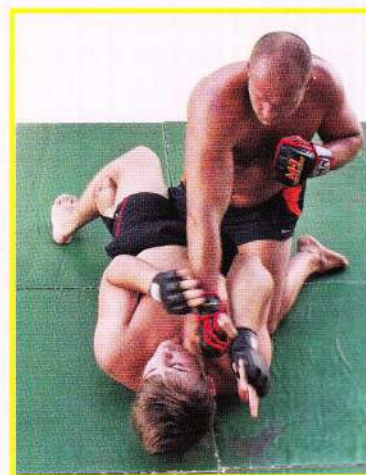
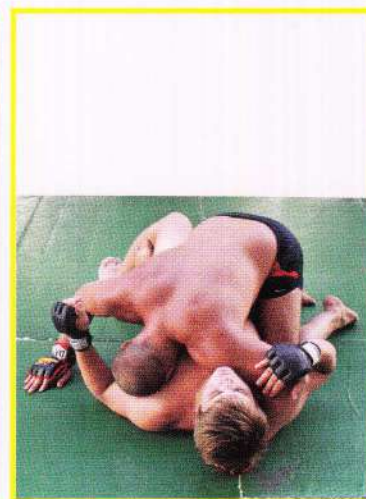
1



Kirill has my right leg trapped between his legs, putting me in his half guard.

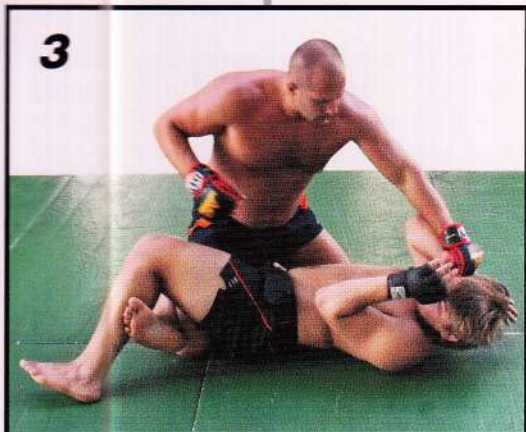


To set up the knee bar, I pull Kirill's focus away from his legs by posturing up and throwing a right cross at his chin.

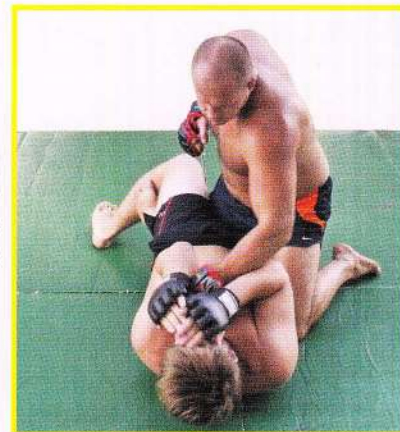




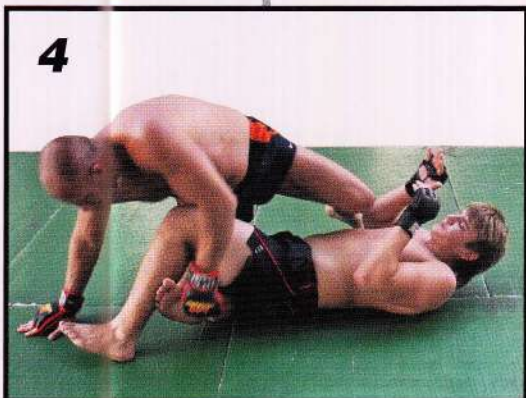
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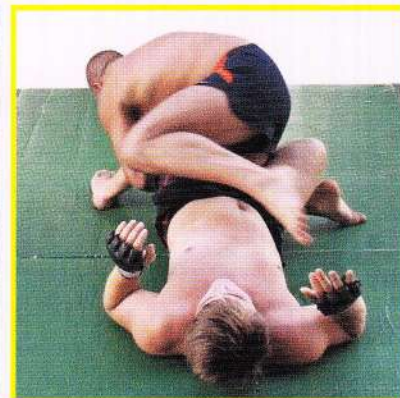
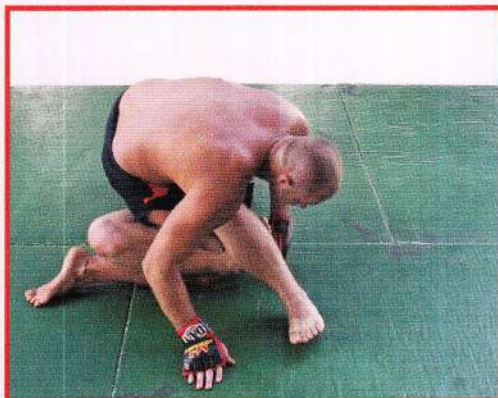
My primary goal is to attack Kirill's left leg with a knee bar, which will require me to rotate my body in a clockwise direction. In order to get my body moving in that direction, I throw a left hook at his face.



4



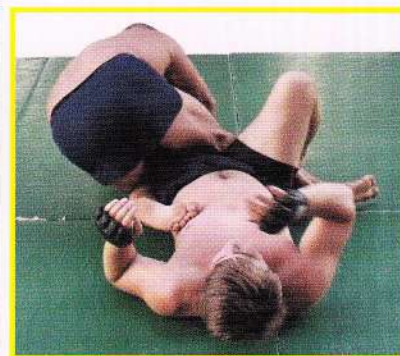
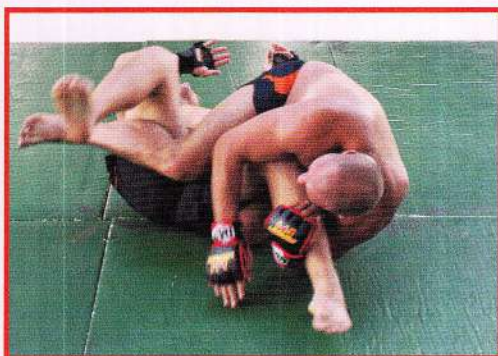
Having stolen Kirill's attention away from his legs, I rotate my body in a clockwise direction, reach my left arm around the outside of his left leg, and step my left leg over his torso.



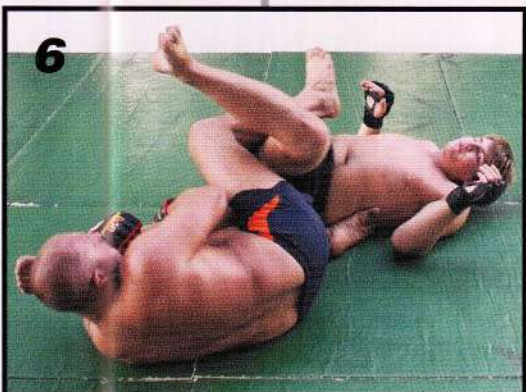
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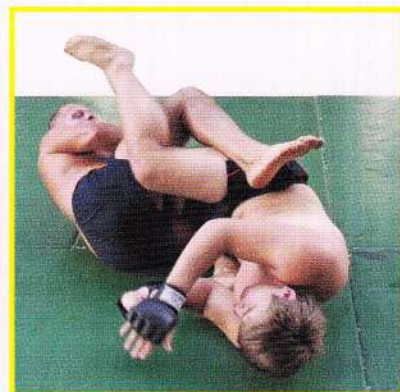
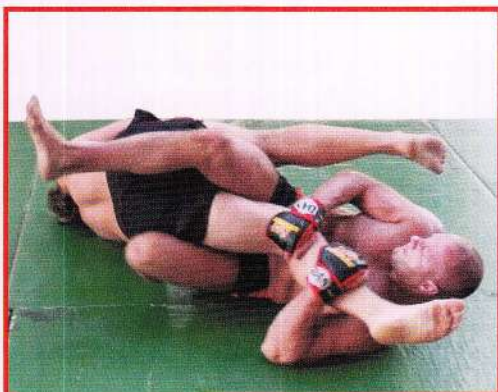
Continuing to rotate in a clockwise direction, I plant my left knee on the mat next to Kirill's left hip and hook my left arm underneath his left leg.



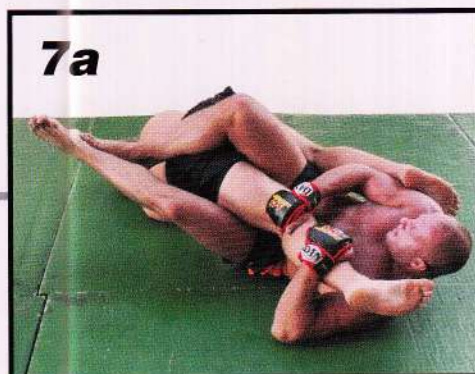
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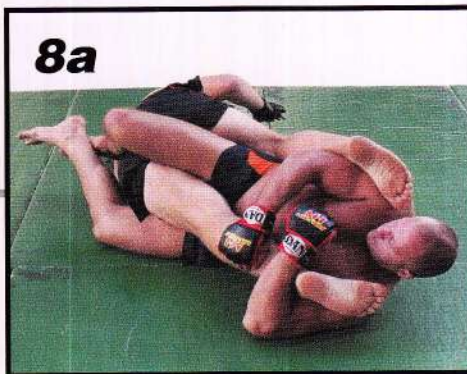
In one fluid motion, I grab the back of Kirill's left knee with my right hand, pull his leg into my chest using both hands, and fall to my left side. The ideal situation would be to finish the knee bar from this position, but should Kirill roll to his belly in an attempt to escape, I can still finish the submission from my back.



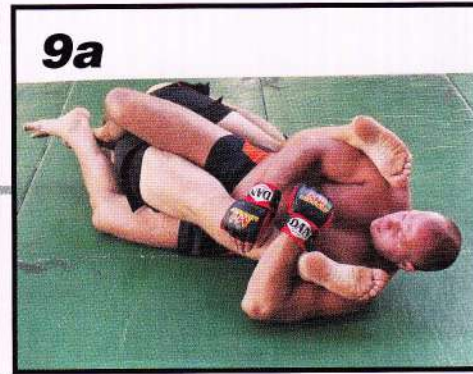


**FINISH OPTION 1**

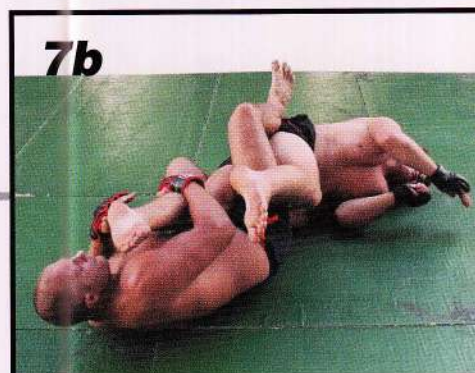
**7a**  
As I fall onto my left side, I wrap my right leg over Kirill's left buttock and pull my left leg out from underneath his right leg.



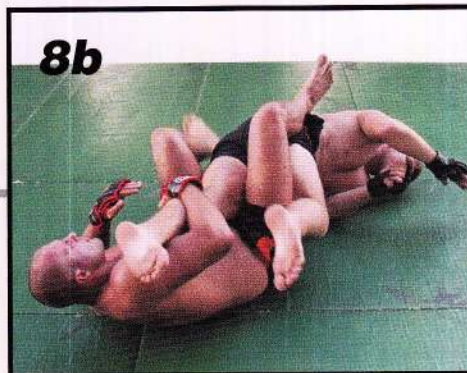
**8a**  
To make my grip on Kirill's left leg tighter, I wrap my left arm around the back of his ankle and hook my left foot over my right foot.



**9a**  
To finish the knee bar, I arch backward, pull Kirill's left leg toward my chest using both of my hands, and thrust my hips into his knee.

**FINISH OPTION 2**

**7b**  
As I fall onto my left side, Kirill attempts to escape the knee bar by rolling over his left shoulder.



**8b**  
As Kirill continues to roll over his left shoulder, I keep his left leg pinned to my chest using my right arm and maneuver my left leg out from underneath his body.

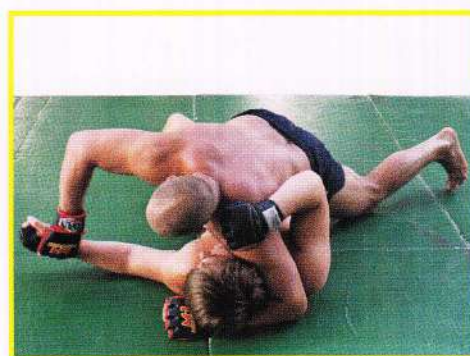
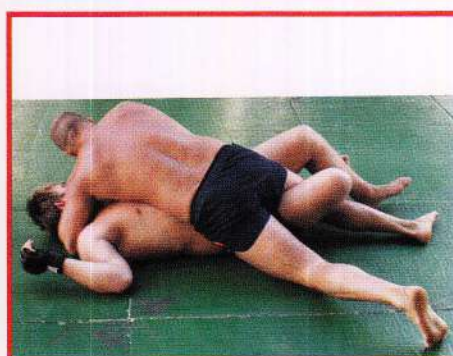


**9b**  
As Kirill rolls up to his knees, I move his left leg to the left side of my head and hook my right leg over my left foot. Unfortunately, finishing him from my side is no longer an option due to his movements. To acquire the angle I need to attack his leg, I roll onto my back. Next, I pull his heel toward my left side using both of my arms and thrust my hips upward into his knee. Although I'm not in the ideal position, I still manage to apply enough pressure to his knee to force him to submit.



## SHOULDER LOCK FROM HALF GUARD TOP

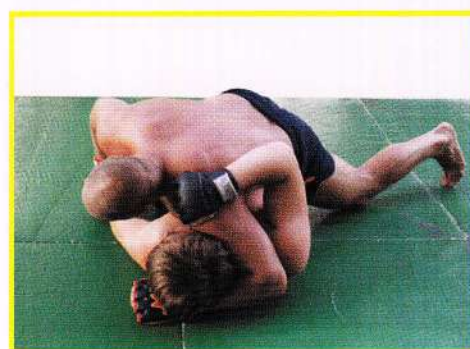
The shoulder lock is another submission that I frequently utilize when in my opponent's half guard. In order to set it up, you must first pin your opponent's back to the mat to limit both his defense and offense. If he has your right leg trapped in his half guard, this can be achieved by wrapping your left arm around the back of his head, driving your left shoulder down into his jaw, and grabbing his far wrist with your right hand. With your opponent unable to turn into you or establish an underhook with his far arm, which could potentially allow him to execute a sweep, you're free to use your wrist control to apply a kimura submission. To accomplish this, use your grip on his far wrist to force his arm toward his hips, and then release your head control and dig your opposite arm underneath his elbow and establish figure-four control on his trapped arm. Although it's certainly possible to finish the kimura from the half guard, your chances are much better from side control. To make the transition, lock in the kimura and apply pressure. As pain shoots through your opponent's shoulder, he will most likely attempt to trap you in his full guard or relieve the pressure by uncrossing his legs and scooting his body out from underneath you. The instant he does either, you will no longer be trapped in the half guard and can transition into side control position, which supplies you with the leverage needed to properly lock in the submission. Personally, I consider the kimura one of the best submissions out there. In the Pride Fighting Championships, I used it to defeat both Mark Hunt and Kevin Randleman from side control.



**1** Kirill has my right leg trapped between his legs, putting me in his half guard. To keep his body pinned to the mat and set up a shoulder lock, I've wrapped my left arm around the back of his head and grabbed his left wrist with my right hand.



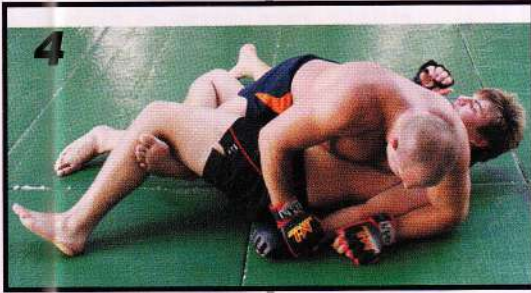
**2** In an attempt to break my grip on his left wrist, Kirill moves his arm toward his legs. Maintaining my grip, I track his movement and then use the weight of my body to pin his hand to the mat. It is important to mention that you can also force your opponent's hand toward his waist if he doesn't move it there voluntarily.



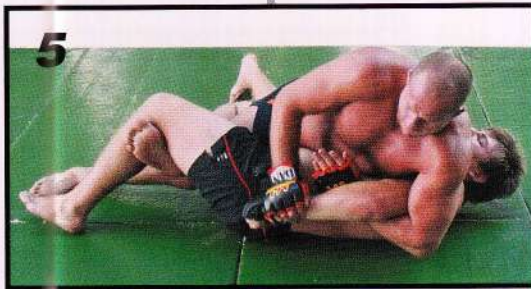
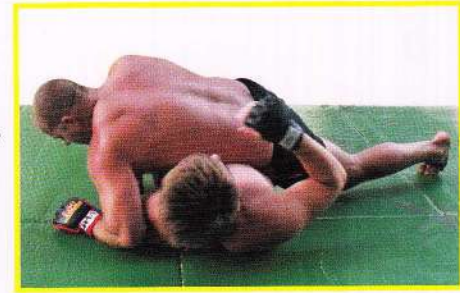
**3** Keeping Kirill's left hand pinned to the mat using my right hand, I pull my left arm out from behind his head.



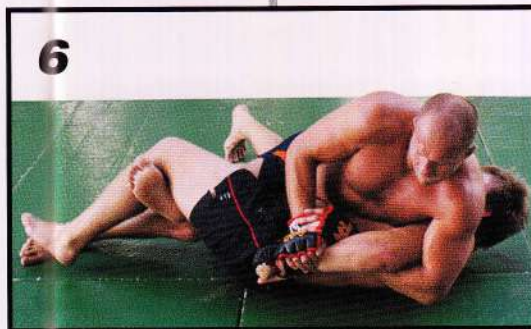
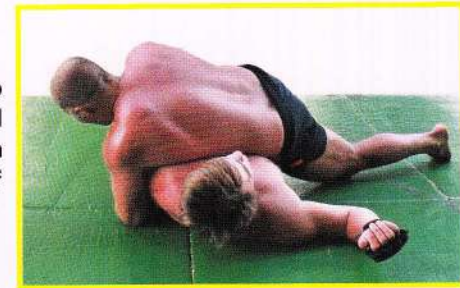




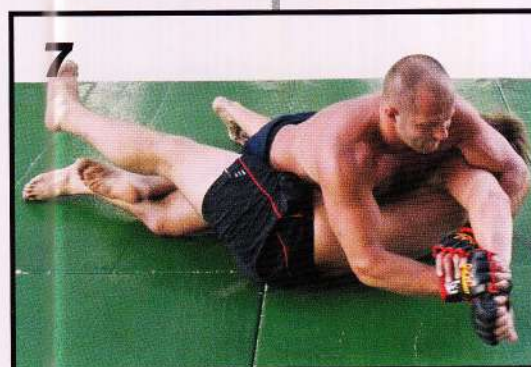
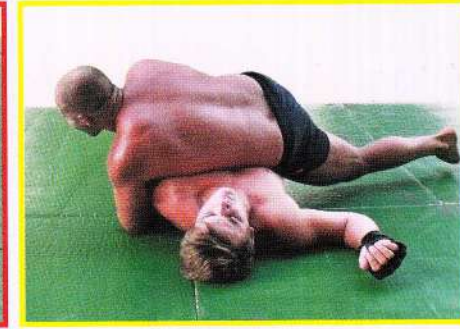
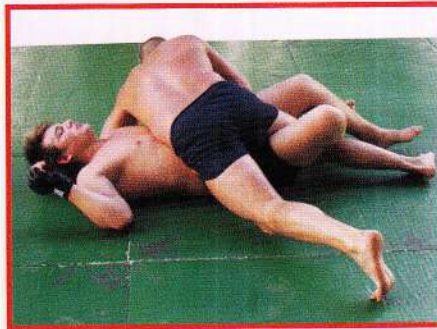
I plant my left elbow on the mat just above Kirill's left shoulder.



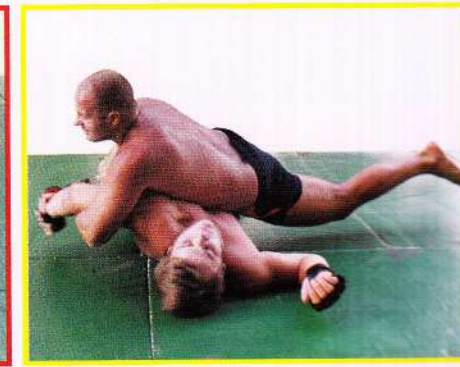
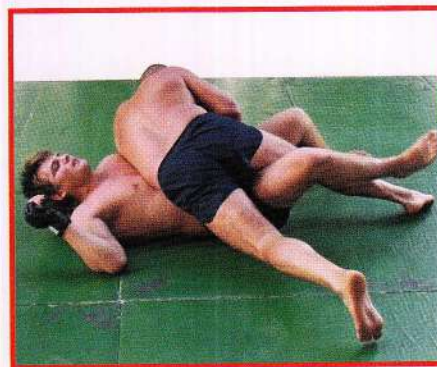
Still applying downward pressure to Kirill's left wrist using my right hand, I wedge my left hand underneath his arm and then wrap my arm around the back of his triceps.



To establish a kimura lock, I latch on to my right wrist with my left hand. To limit Kirill's offensive and defensive options, I keep his back pinned to the mat by distributing my weight over his torso.

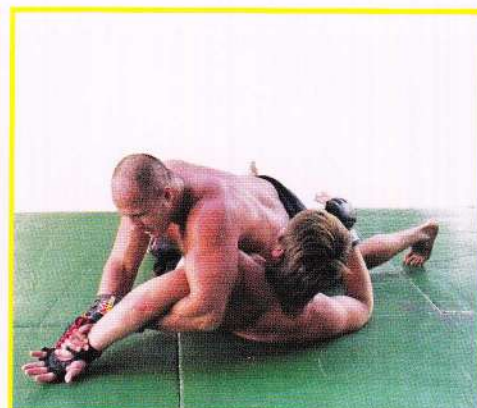
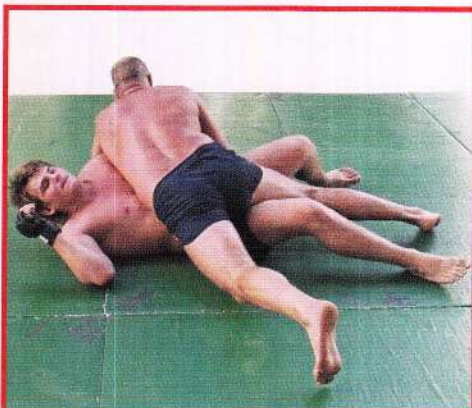


The instant I establish the kimura lock, I lift my left leg off the mat and arch backward. These actions force Kirill onto his right side and allow me to elevate his left shoulder off the mat. Once I have his shoulder up, I put a tremendous amount of pressure on his elbow and shoulder by pushing his wrist across the mat using my right hand and pulling my left arm upward into his triceps.



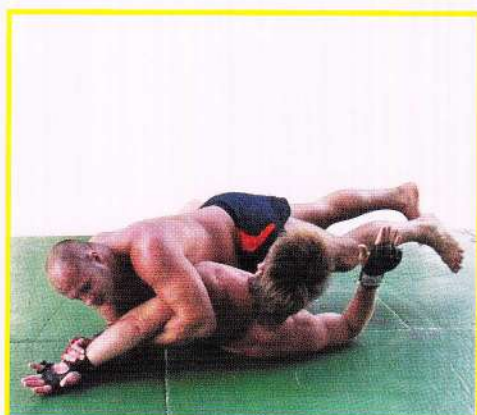
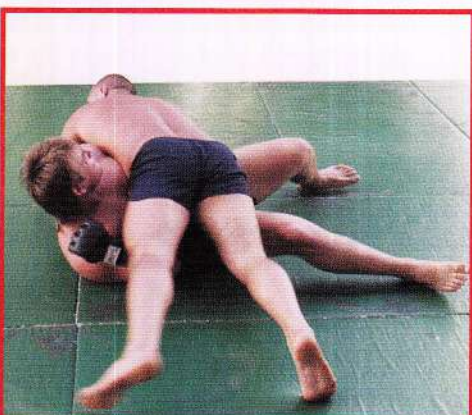


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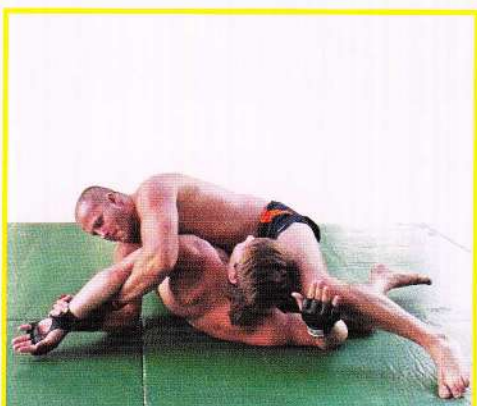
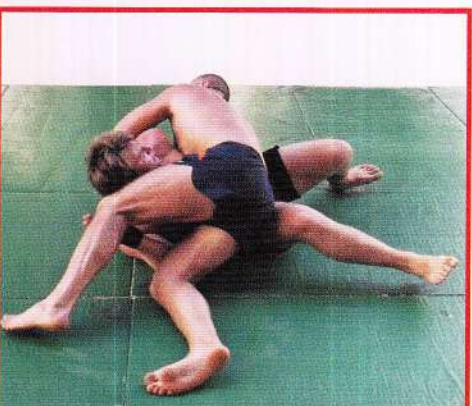
Kirill opens his legs and turns onto his right side in an attempt to relieve the pressure I'm putting on his shoulder.

9



The instant Kirill opens his guard, I hop my right leg over his right leg and pass into side control. When making this transition, it is imperative that you keep your weight distributed over your opponent's torso with your kimura lock intact.

10



Posting my left foot on the mat by Kirill's head, I slide his left hand across the mat in the direction of his head using my right hand and pull my left forearm up into his triceps. The combination of these actions puts a massive amount of pressure on his elbow and shoulder, forcing him to tap.

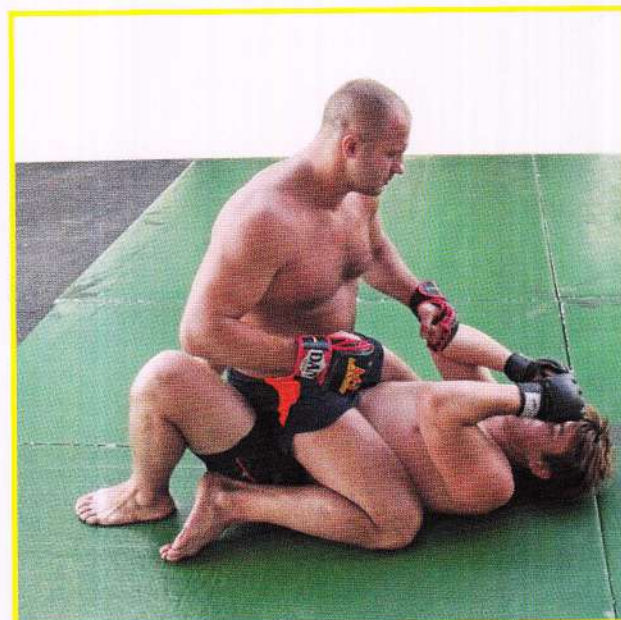


## STRAIGHT ARM LOCK FROM MOUNT

The mount is an excellent position from which to throw a plethora of downward punches at your opponent's face, but in order to truly master the position, you must understand how to use those downward strikes to set up submissions. After all, very few opponents will remain flat on their back as you deliver a beating. The instant you begin landing hard shots, they will react in one way or another. How they react will determine what submissions are available to you. In this particular sequence, my opponent attempts to turn onto his side to avoid my strikes, which is perhaps the most common reaction. Before he can accomplish his goal, I trap his arm by grabbing his wrist, rotate my hips behind his captured arm, and then apply an armbar. This particular armbar is unique because instead of utilizing the traditional method of capturing my opponent's arm and dropping to my back to finish the submission, I remain postured in the mount position. Both variations are effective, but the one below is quicker and therefore harder to escape.



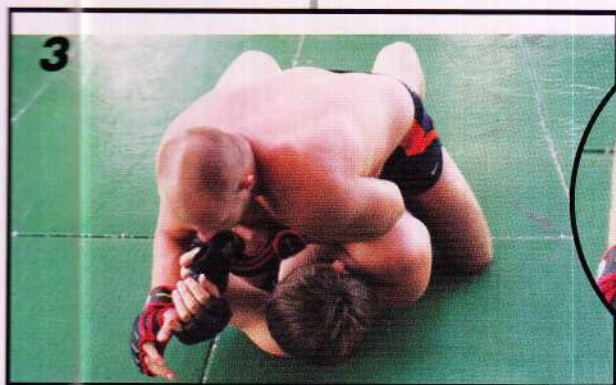
I've secured the mount position on Kirill.



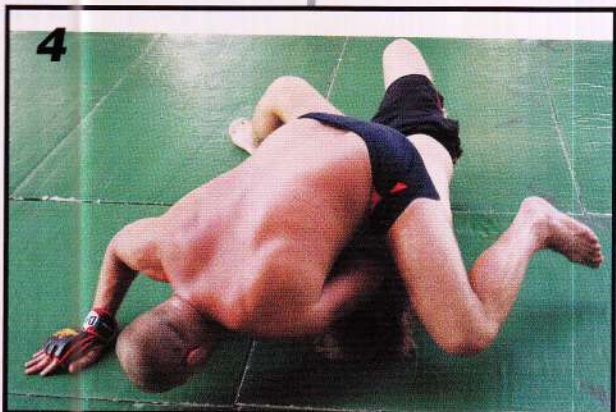
I throw a straight right hand at Kirill's face.



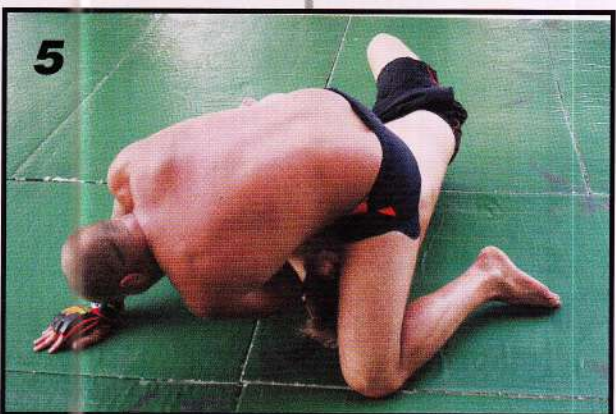




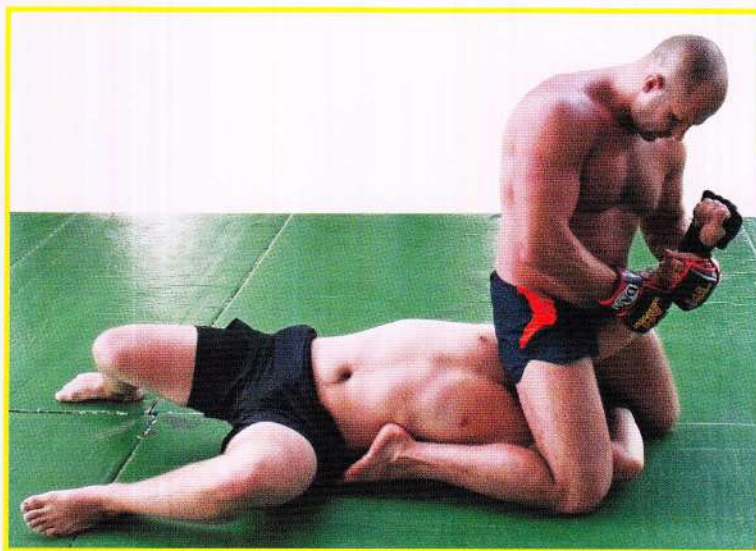
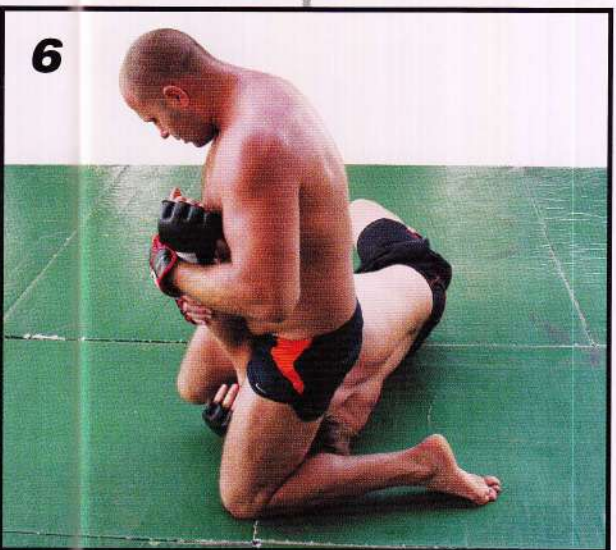
In an attempt to avoid my punches, Kirill rolls over his left shoulder. Immediately I grab his right wrist with my left hand and collapse my chest over the back of his right arm.



Maintaining a tight grip on Kirill's right wrist with my left hand, I throw my weight forward, post my right hand on the mat, and float my hips in a clockwise direction around his right arm.



I spin my hips around the back of Kirill's right arm and plant my left knee on the mat above his head.

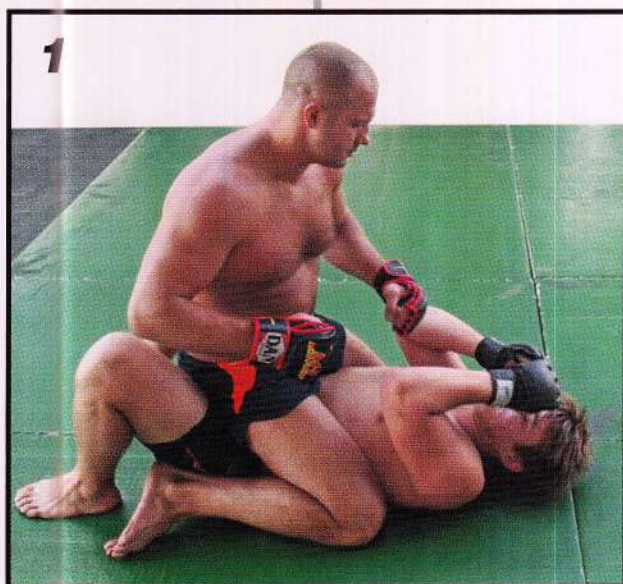


I posture up, grab Kirill's right arm with my right hand, and then use both of my hands to draw his arm toward my chest. With my hips positioned behind his right elbow, I can hyperextend his right arm by pulling it over my inner left thigh. It is important to notice that I've positioned his arm so that his thumb is pointing away from me.

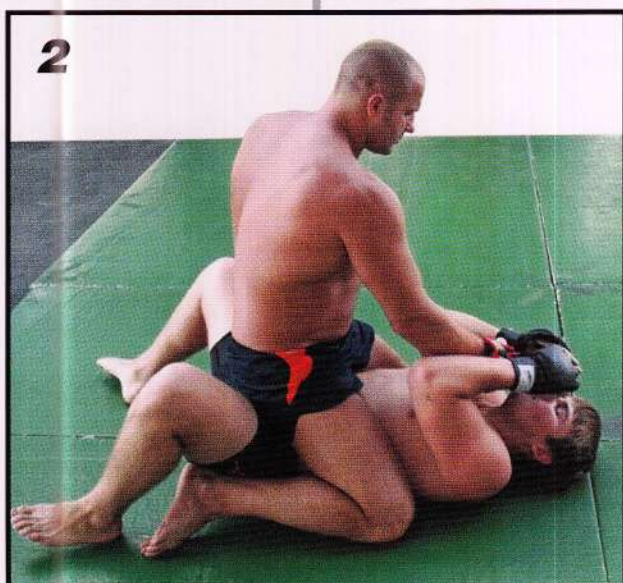
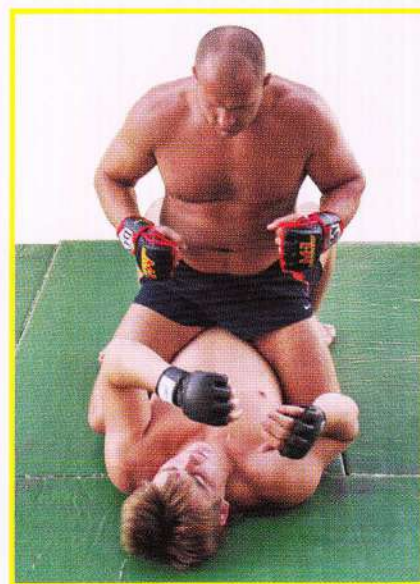


## OVER-THE-BACK ARMBAR

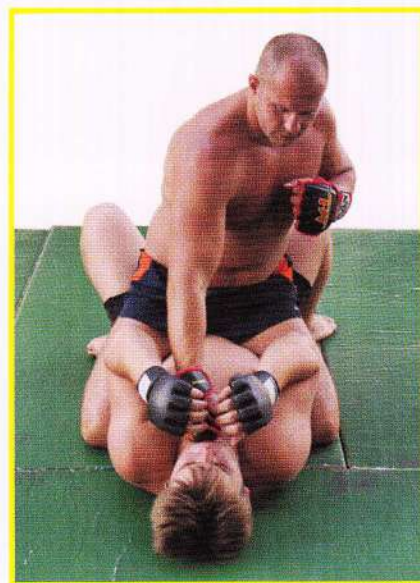
As discussed in the previous introduction, when you begin throwing downward strikes from the mount position your opponent's most common reaction will be to cover his head with his arms and roll onto his side by elevating his hips and bridging over one of his shoulders. In such a scenario, you have several options. If you can get your hips behind your opponent's top arm before he can roll over his shoulder, applying the armbar demonstrated in the previous sequence is an excellent option. However, if your opponent has an explosive bridge, securing that armbar isn't always possible. In such a scenario, two of your best options are to float your hips over your opponent's body and allow him to roll to his stomach or use his roll against him by executing the over-the-back armbar depicted in the sequence below. If you look at the photos, you'll notice that my opponent attempts to escape the mount by driving off the mat with both feet, elevating his hips, and rolling over his right shoulder. The instant he does this, I hook my right arm around his left arm, float my hips behind his arm, and then slide my right shin across the back of his head. Although my opponent manages to get up to his knees, he doesn't stay there for long. By applying downward pressure to the back of his head with my shin, I force him to roll over his left shoulder and onto his back. When he lands, all I have to do to catch him in an armbar is throw my right leg over his head, pull his arm into my chest, and elevate my hips into his elbow. It's excellent when each step goes according to the book and the armbar comes easy, but matters don't always play out in this fashion. To see an alternate version of this same technique, flip to the next sequence.



I've secured the mount position on Kirill.

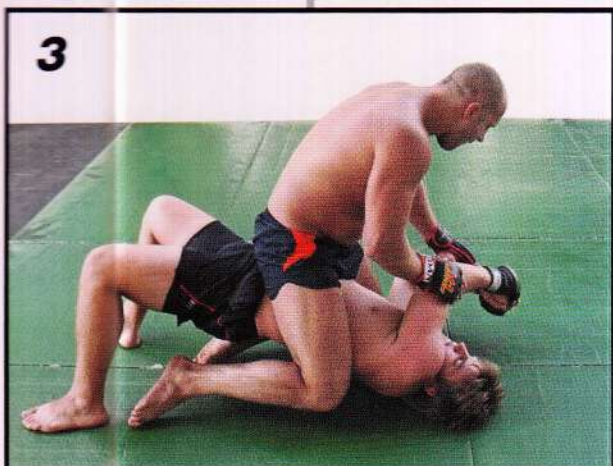


I throw a straight right at Kirill's face.



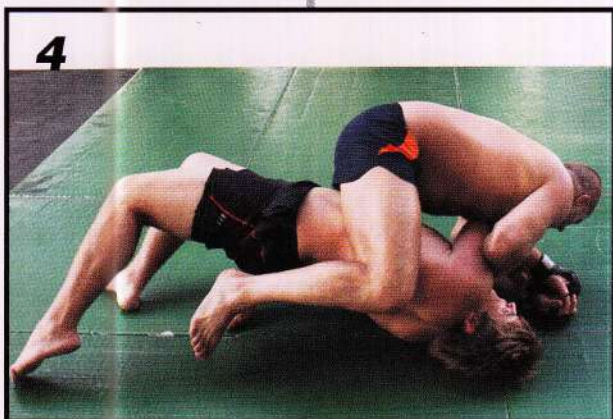


3



In an attempt to escape my assault of downward punches, Kirill drives off both of his feet, elevates his hips, and bridges over his right shoulder.

4



As Kirill bridges over his right shoulder, I hook the crook of my right arm around the crook of his left arm.

5

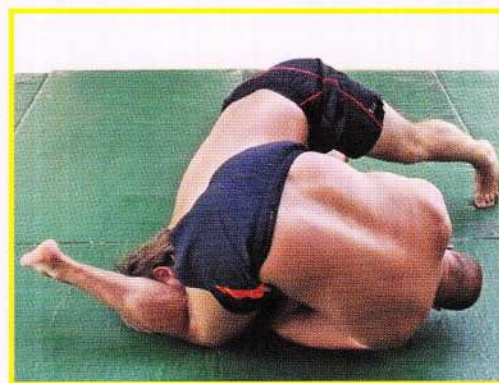
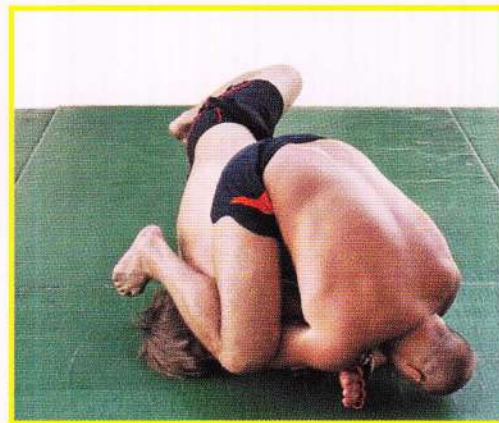
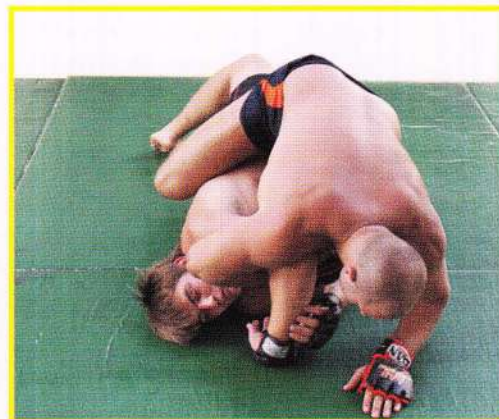
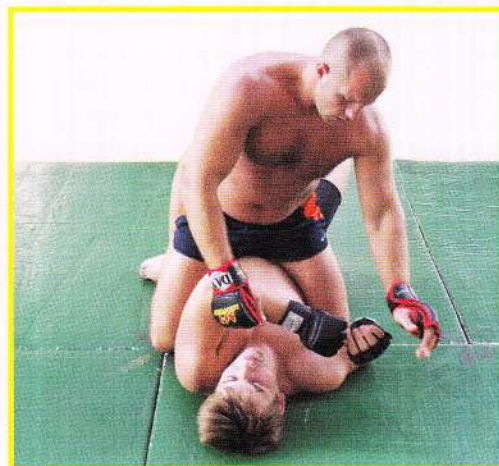


Kirill continues to roll over his right shoulder. Before he can make it up to his knees, I float my hips in a counterclockwise direction around the back of his left arm and slide my right shin over the back of his neck.

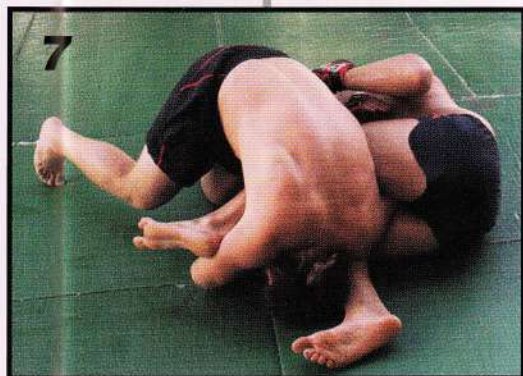
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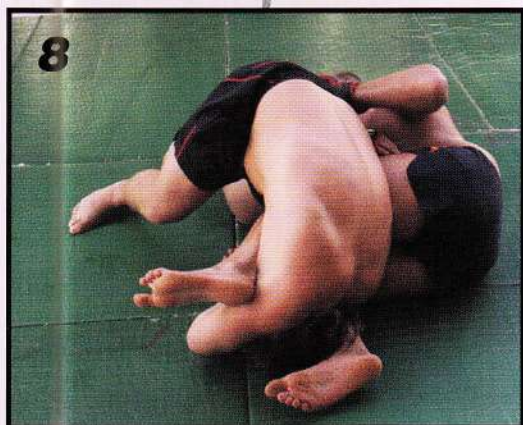
Keeping my right arm hooked around Kirill's left arm, I roll over my right shoulder.



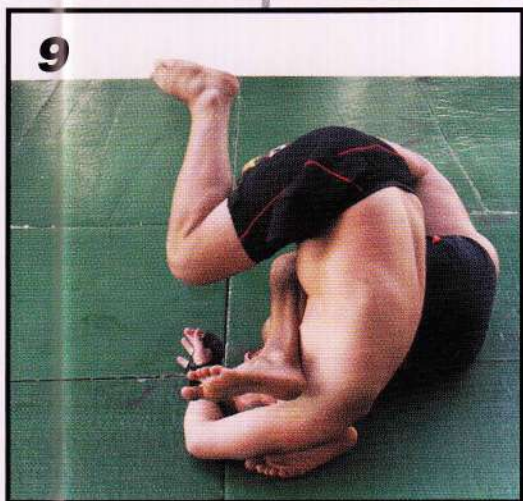




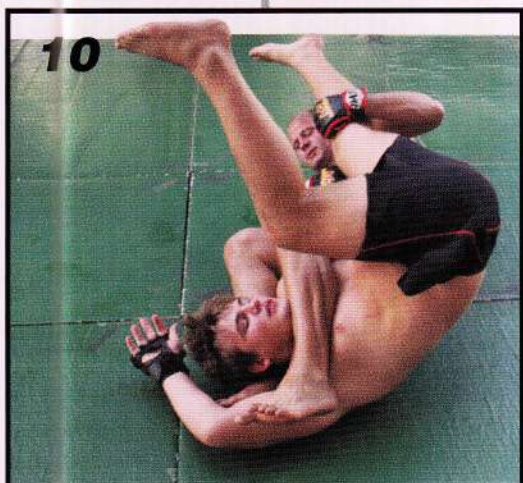
I fall to my right side.



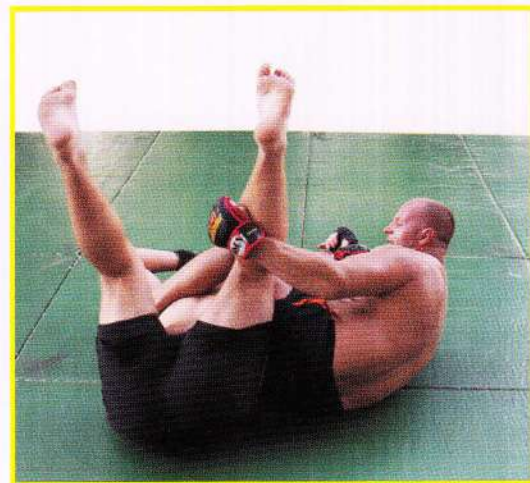
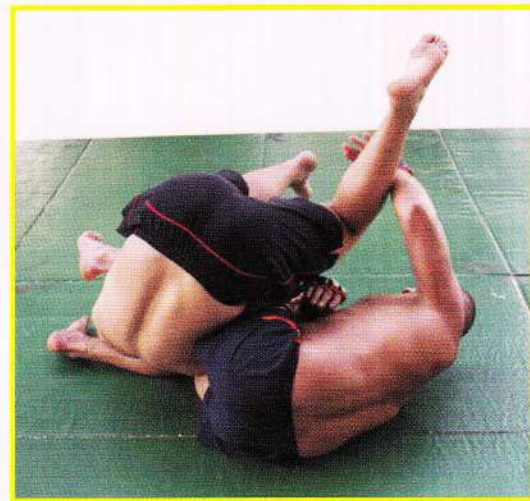
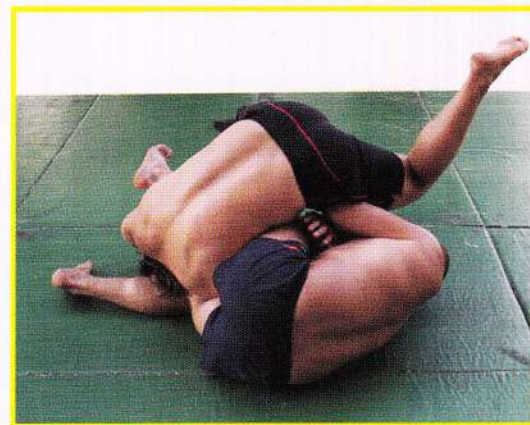
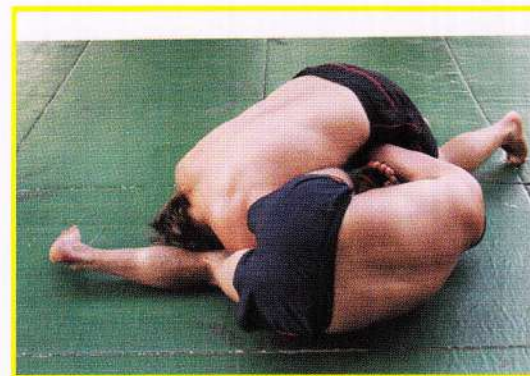
I drive my right shin into the back of Kirill's neck and curl my left leg into his torso.



Continuing to drive my right shin into the back of Kirill's neck and curl my left leg into his torso, I force his left leg over his head using my left hand. The combination of these actions sends him into a forward roll.

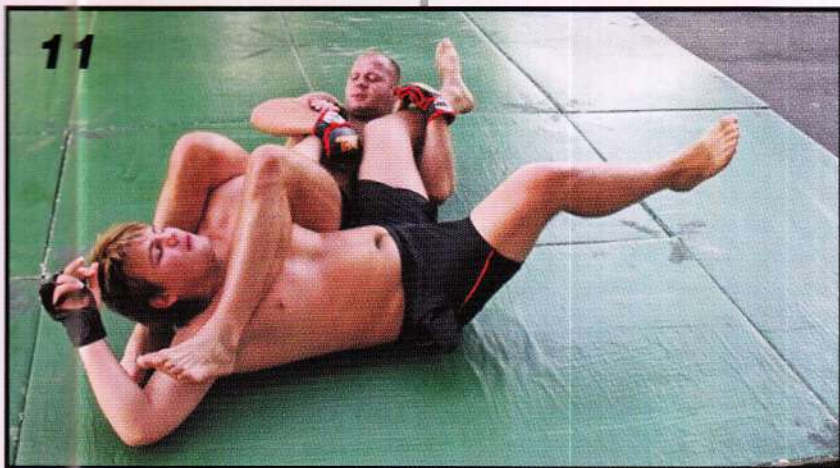


As Kirill rolls toward his back, I hook my left arm around the back of his left leg. If you do not control your opponent's legs in this manner, his chances of escaping the submission are much greater.

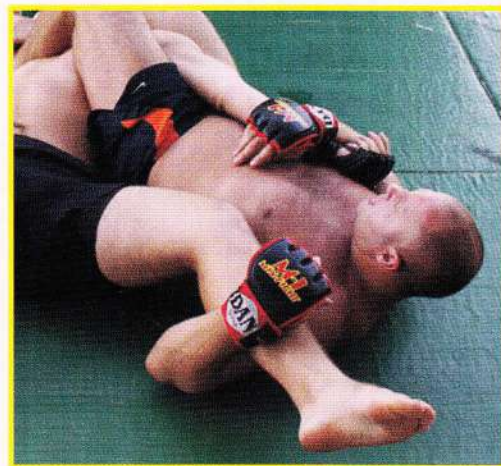




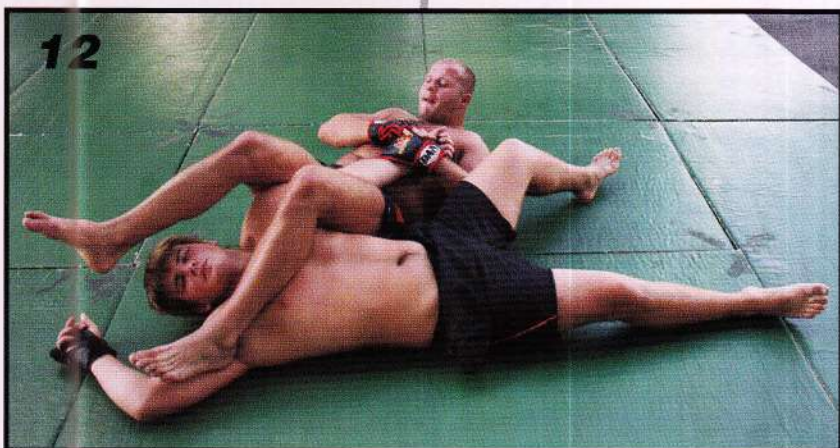
11



I keep my left arm hooked around Kirill's left leg until he lands on his back.

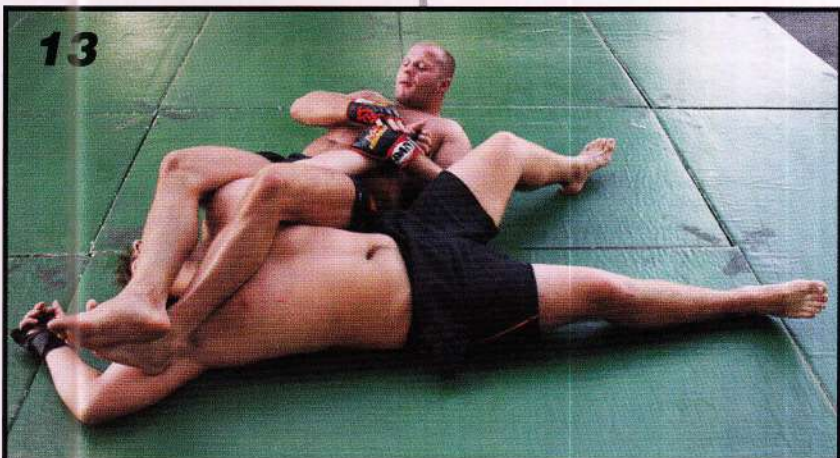


12

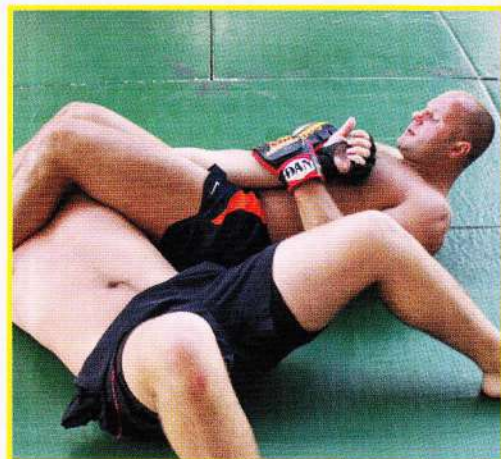


The instant Kirill comes down on his back, I grab his left wrist with both of my hands and pull my right leg out from behind his head.

13



Keeping Kirill's left arm pinned to my chest using both of my hands, I hook my right foot over my left foot. To finish the armbar, I curl my legs into his body, elevate my hips into his elbow, and use both of my hands to pull his left arm over the inside of my left thigh.



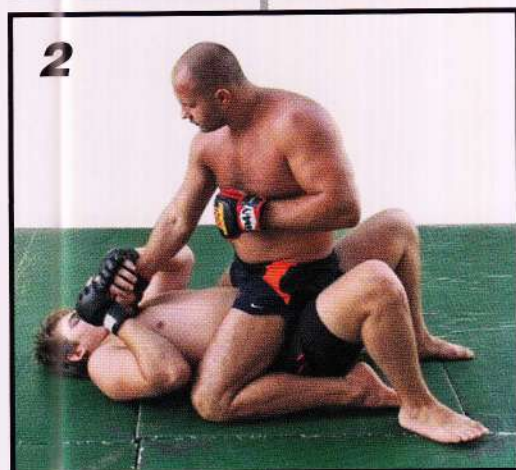


## OVER-THE-BACK ARMBAR 2

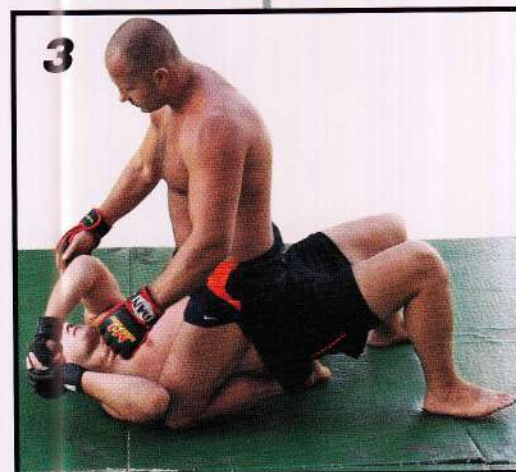
This armbar is similar to the previous one in that it's applied when your opponent attempts to escape the bottom mount position by driving both feet off the mat, elevating his hips, and bridging over one shoulder. And just as with the previous technique, you use his reaction to hook his arm and slide your shin across the back of his neck. However, this technique takes a different path when your opponent climbs up to his knees. Instead of forcing your opponent to roll over to his back by driving your shin into the back of his neck and guiding his legs over his head, you remove your shin from the back of his head and lock in the armbar while he is still on his knees. If you are quick to lock the armbar tight, a lot of times your opponent will immediately tap. Other times he will attempt to escape by executing a forward roll. Such a scenario is nothing to cause concern because your opponent's roll will put him on his back, allowing you to finish the armbar just as you did in the previous technique. At the end of this sequence, I offer two methods for finishing the armbar. In the first finish I pull my opponent's arm toward my right side, and in the second option I pull it toward my left side. Deciding which option to choose should be based upon the position of your opponent's arm when he lands on his back.



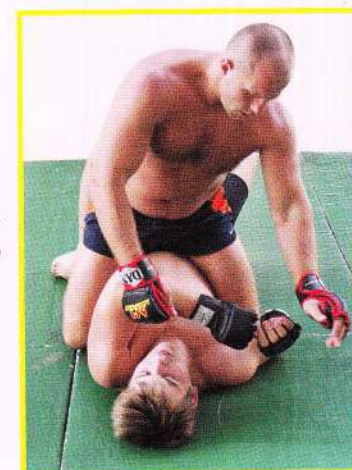
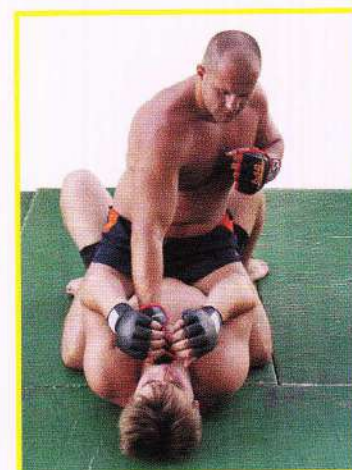
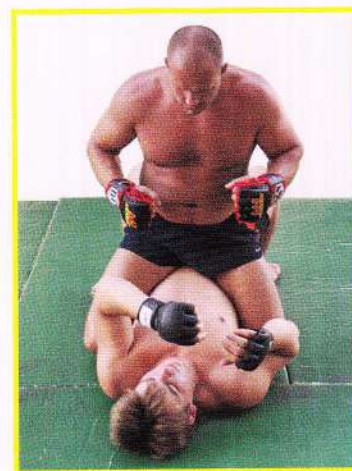
I've secured the mount position on Kirill.



I throw a straight right cross at Kirill's face.

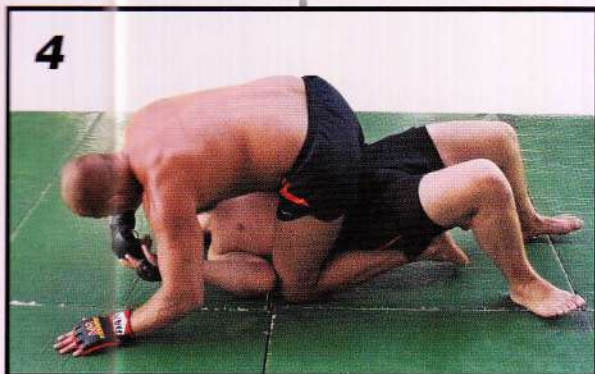


In an attempt to escape my onslaught of punches, Kirill drives off both of his feet, elevates his hips, and bridges over his right shoulder.



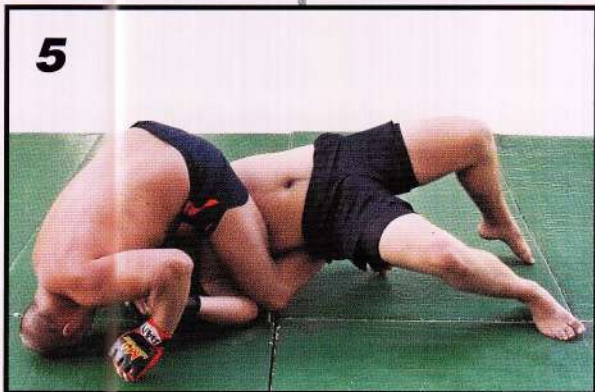


4



As Kirill bridges over his right shoulder, I hook the crook of my right arm around the crook of his left arm.

5



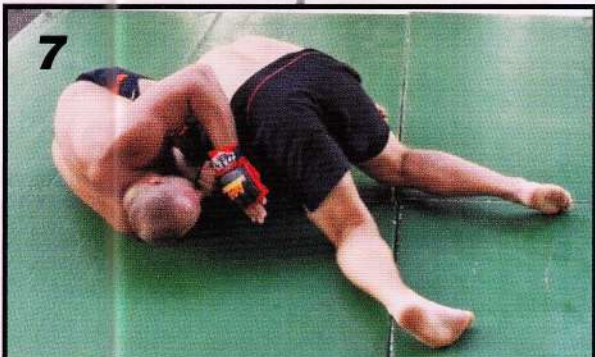
Kirill continues to roll over his right shoulder. Before he can make it up to his knees, I float my hips in a counterclockwise direction around the back of his left arm and slide my right shin over the back of his neck.

6



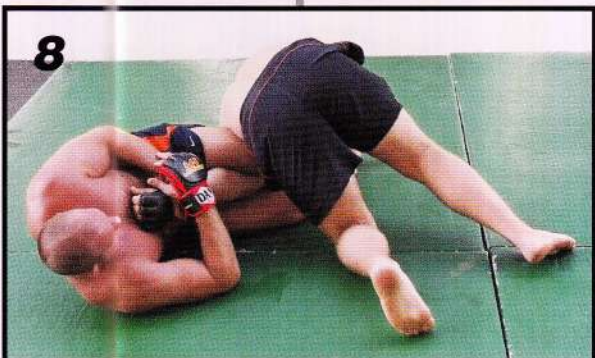
Keeping my right arm hooked deep around the inside of Kirill's left arm, I roll onto my right shoulder.

7

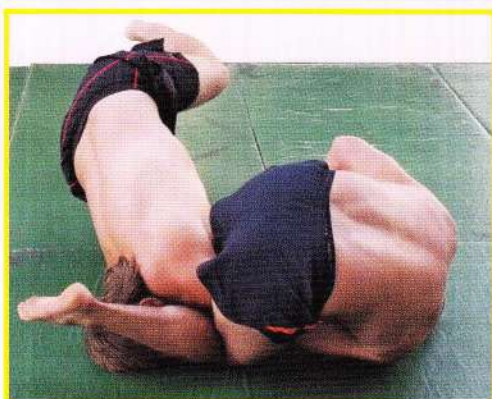
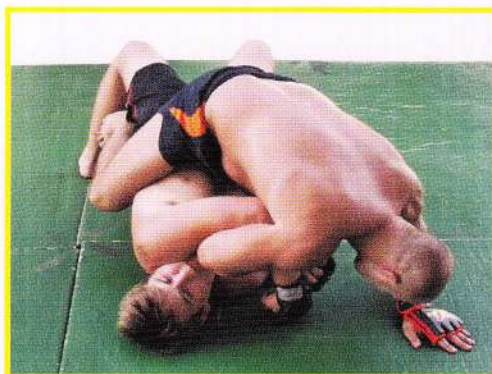


I fall onto my right side.

8

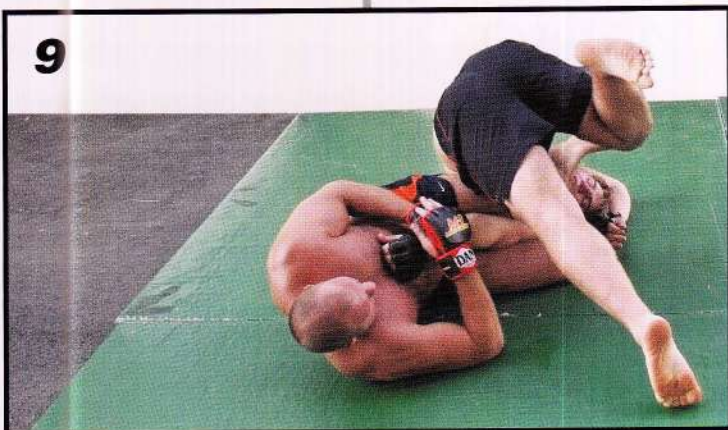


I apply the armbar by pulling Kirill's left arm into my chest with both of my hands and thrusting my hips into his elbow. However, if your opponent attempts to counter the armbar by executing a forward roll, you'll want to utilize the movements detailed below.



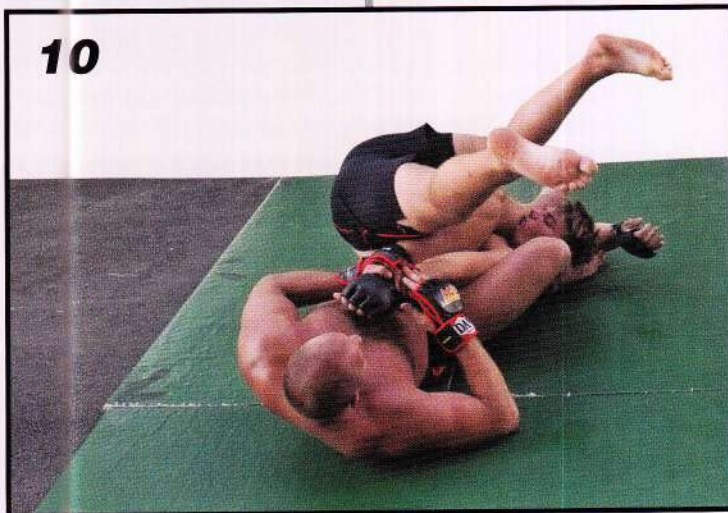


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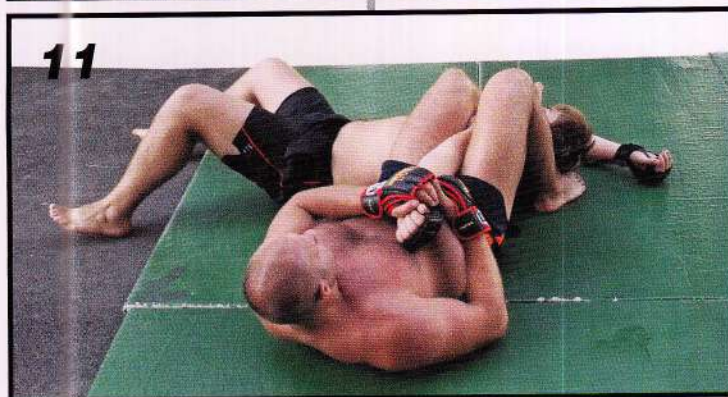
In an attempt to escape the armbar, Kirill drives off his left foot and rolls over his left shoulder. Notice how I keep his arm extended as he rolls toward his back. This will allow me to lock in the armbar the instant he lands.

10



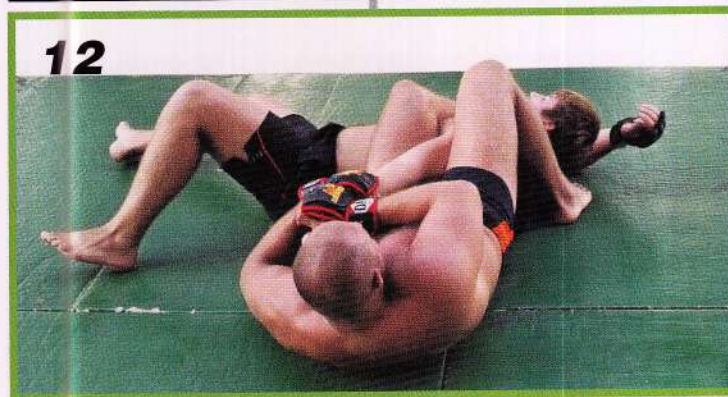
As Kirill rolls toward his back, I maintain control of his left arm using both of my hands.

11



Kirill lands on his back. Immediately I lock in the armbar by pinching my knees together, elevating my hips into his elbow, and pulling his arm toward my right side using my hands. Notice how his arm is bent over my right thigh.

12



In this scenario, Kirill's elbow is pointed toward my left side when he lands. Instead of repositioning his arm to the right side of my body, I move his arm toward the left side of my body and use my left thigh as a fulcrum.



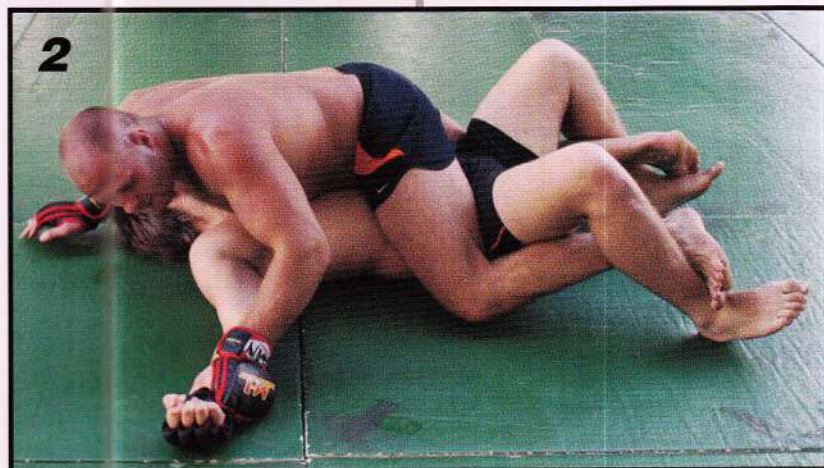


## SHOULDER LOCK FROM MOUNT

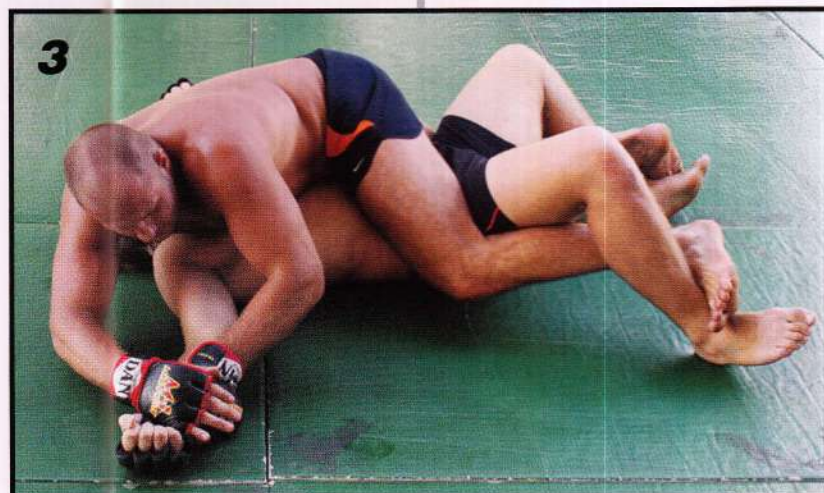
In this sequence I demonstrate how to apply the Americana shoulder lock, or “keylock,” from the mount position. Instead of setting it up by posturing up and throwing downward strikes, stretch your opponent out by hooking your feet to the inside of his thighs and then extending your legs—a technique commonly referred to as “the grapevine.” Applying the grapevine prevents your opponent from posting his feet near his buttocks and then using the positioning of his legs to elevate his hips and bridge over a shoulder. It also provides you with the balance and stability needed to execute the Americana shoulder lock.



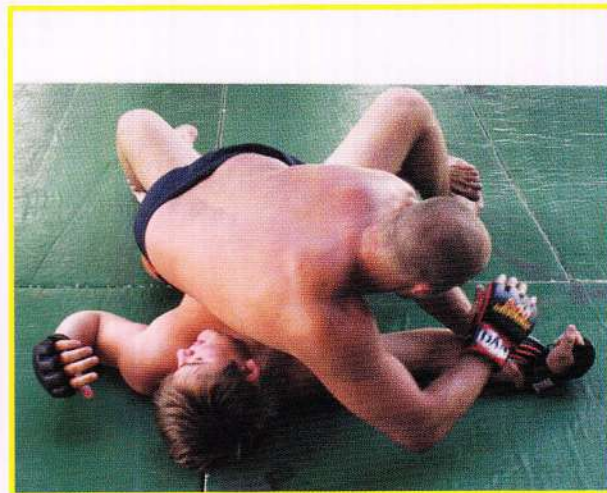
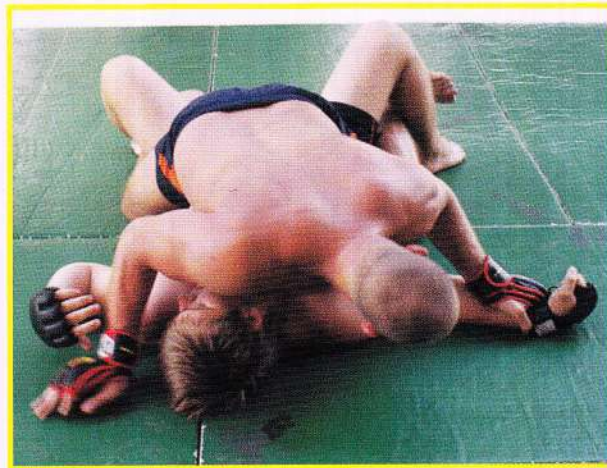
I've secured the mount position on Kirill. In order to set up the Americana shoulder lock, I pin him on his back by driving my weight forward and collapsing my chest over his torso. Next, I hook both of my feet around the inside of his legs to prevent him from escaping by driving off his feet, elevating his hips, and bridging over a shoulder. Having severely limited both his offense and defense, I isolate his right arm by grabbing his right wrist with my left hand. The reason I've chosen to attack his right arm is because my head is on the right side of his body, allowing me to distribute more of my weight into his arm to keep it pinned to the mat. If my head were positioned on the left side of his body, I would have attacked his left arm.



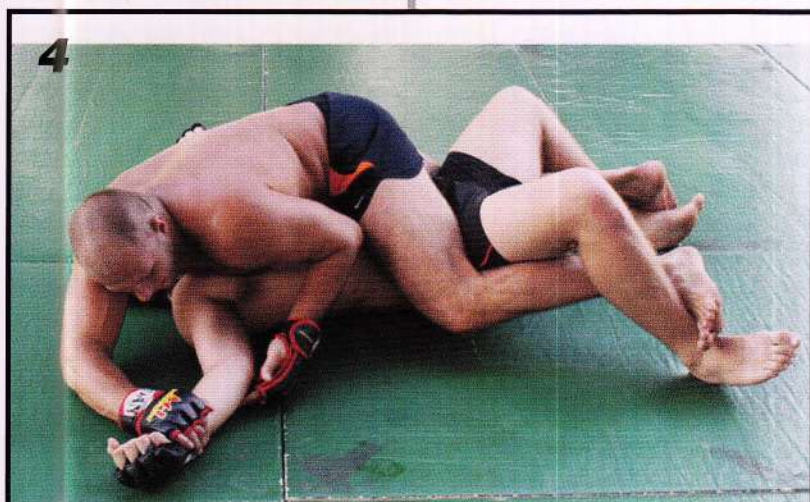
Kirill attempts to break my grip by straightening his right arm, but due to my solid grip and the weight I have distributed over his arm, he is unable to shatter my hold.



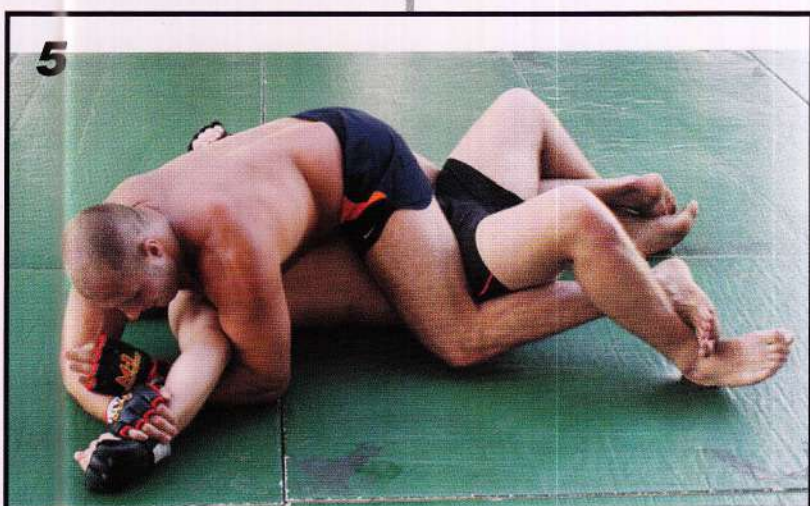
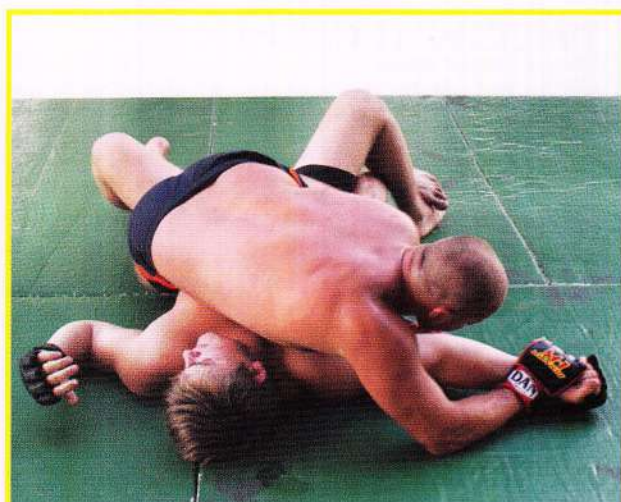
I reach my right arm over Kirill's head and prepare to replace my left grip on his wrist with a right grip.



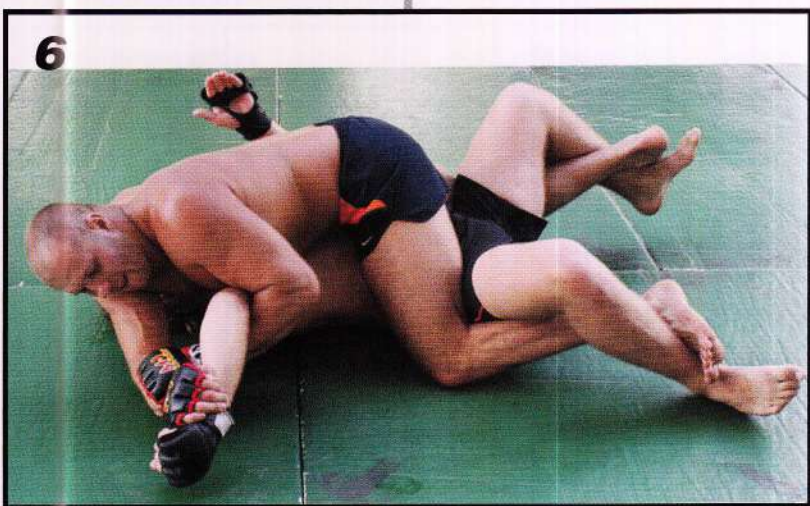
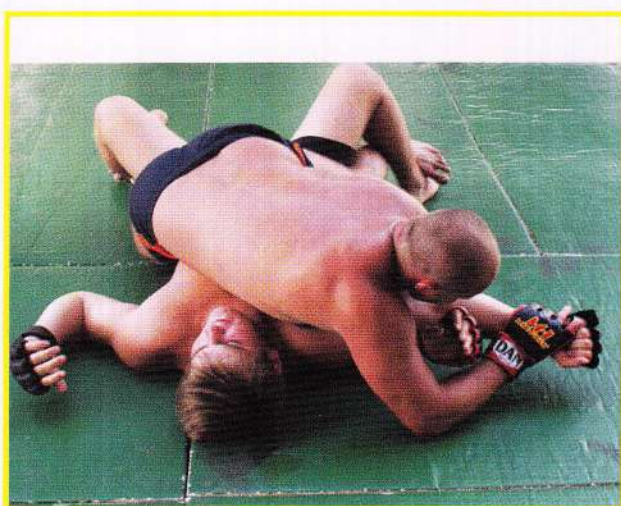




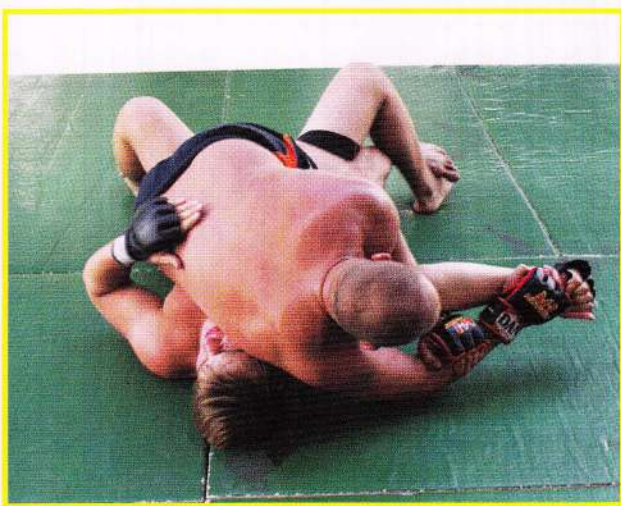
**4** I establish a firm grip on Kirill's right wrist with my right hand, and then release my left grip and slide my left hand toward his right elbow. Notice how I turn my hand over so my palm is facing the ceiling.



**5** I slide my left arm underneath Kirill's right elbow, hook the crook of my arm around his triceps just above his elbow, and reach toward my right wrist with my left hand.



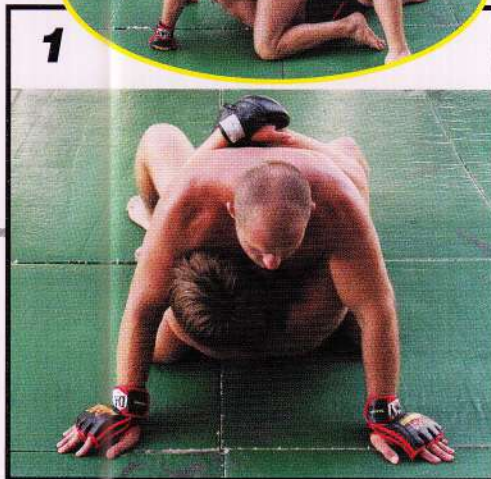
**6** To apply the submission, I grab my right wrist with my left hand, rotate my shoulders in a counterclockwise direction, force Kirill's right hand toward his legs using my right hand, and drive my left forearm upward into his right elbow. The combination of these actions places a large amount of pressure on his elbow and shoulder, forcing him to submit.



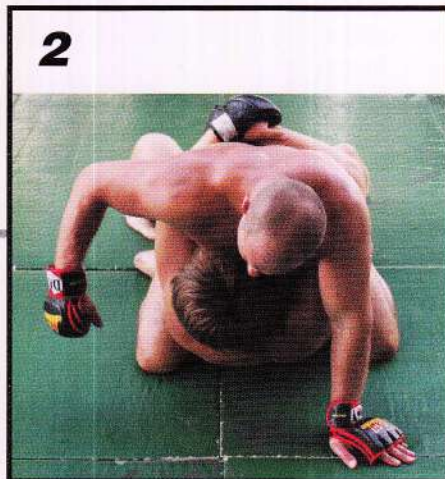


## NECK CRANK

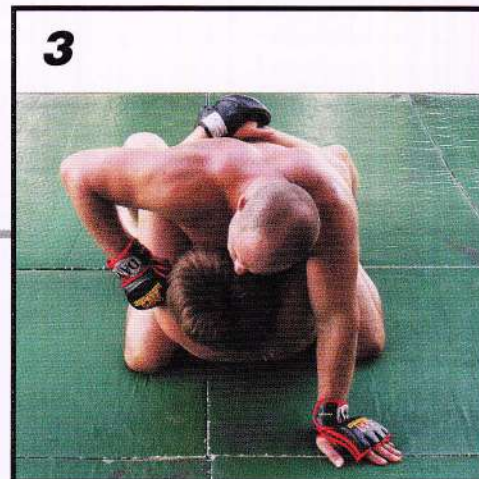
When you secure the mount position, a lot of opponents will reach their arms underneath your arms, wrap them around your waist, and secure a body lock by clasping their hands together in the center of your back. It can be quite frustrating when your opponent utilizes this defense because every time you posture up, his body comes with you, making it difficult to land effective strikes or lock in a submission. There are many techniques that you can utilize to counter this hold, but I prefer to throw short strikes at the sides of my opponent's head and then apply a neck crank to break his hold. When done correctly, the neck crank is capable of putting your opponent in so much pain that he taps in submission, but most of the time he will attempt to escape by placing his hands on your chest and pushing you away. If the latter is the case, he will no longer have a body lock, allowing you to posture up and begin delivering downward strikes. It's not the prettiest move, but it is effective.



I've secured the mount position on Kirill. In an attempt to nullify my attacks, he reaches both of his hands underneath my arms, wraps his arms around my waist, and secures a body lock by gripping his hands together in the center of my back. The instant he establishes the body lock, I post both of my hands on the mat and extend my arms to lift his head off the mat. This forces him to use the strength in his arms to maintain his hold.



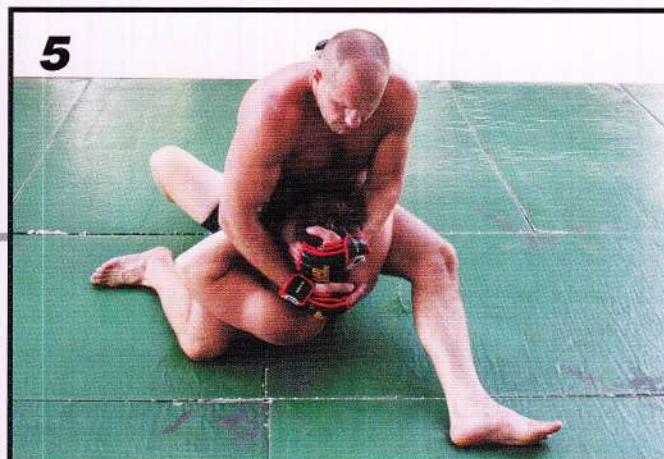
Keeping my left hand posted on the mat, I cock my right hand back and prepare to land a chopping punch to the left side of Kirill's head.



I throw a short right hook to the side of Kirill's head.



I post my left foot on the mat in front of me. Next, I set up the neck crank by wrapping my left hand around the back of Kirill's head and pulling it toward my abdomen.

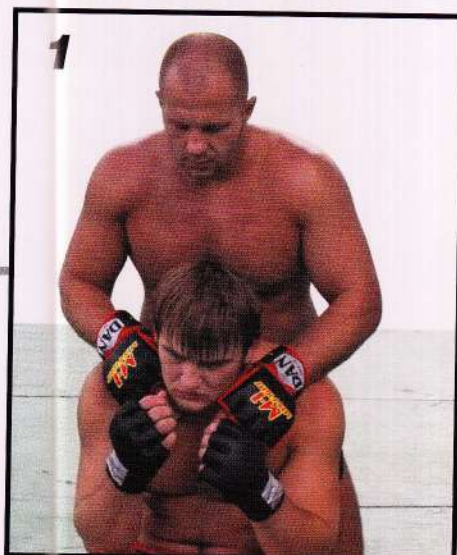


To finish the neck crank, I wrap my right hand around the back of Kirill's head and then use both of my hands to pull his head toward my abdomen. To avoid the pain, Kirill releases his grip and places his hands on my chest to push me away. From here, I can continue to apply the neck crank or release my hold, posture up, and begin throwing downward strikes.

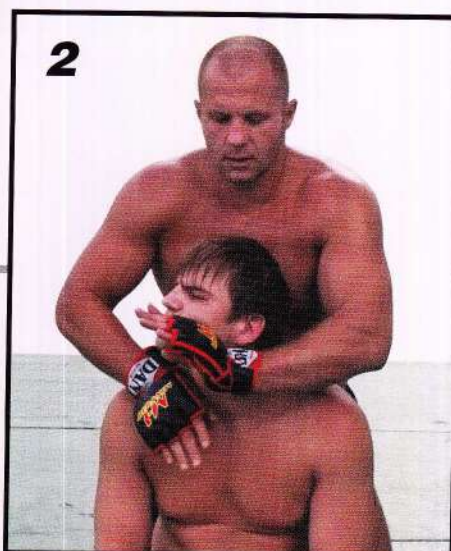


## REAR NAKED CHOKE

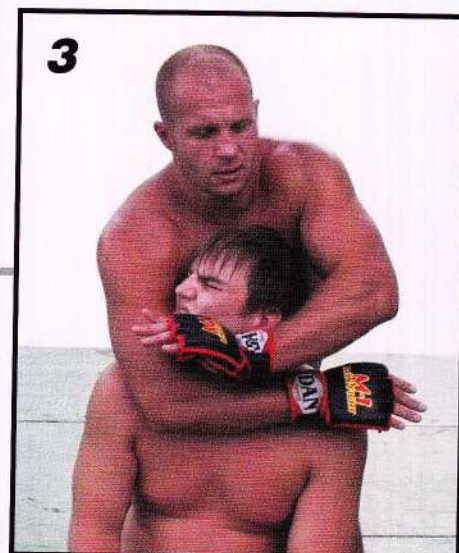
The rear naked choke is a highly effective submission that can be applied from either back control or the rear mount. It is responsible for ending countless fights, but for that exact reason, competitors are spending a lot more time learning how to defend against it. In the sequence below, I demonstrate what I consider the most effective way to apply the choke. Instead of locking it in from either back control or the rear mount, I apply the choke from my knees because it provides the best angle for demonstration purposes. To begin, place your thumbs into the crevasse between your opponent's jaw and neck up by his ears, and then slide your thumbs down the crevasse until they are underneath his chin. This gives you the ability to lift his chin and force his head to turn to one side. If you force his head up and to his right using your left hand, you create the room needed to slide your right arm around his neck. To finish the choke from this position, all you have to do is grab your left biceps with your right hand, curl your left arm inward, place your left hand on top of his head, and squeeze. The hold cuts off both the air and blood flow to your opponent's brain, and if he does not tap quickly, he'll be put to sleep.



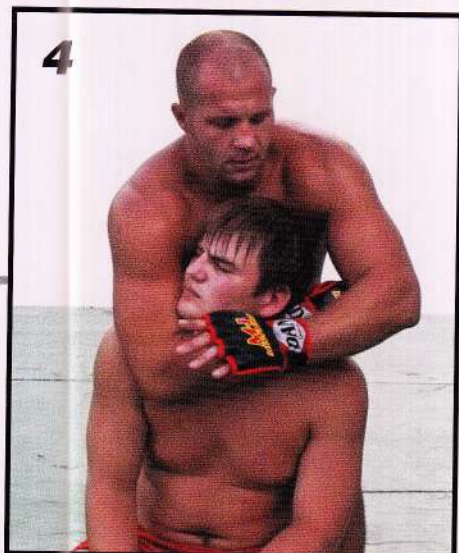
**1** To setup the rear naked choke, I jam both of my thumbs into the crevasse underneath Kirill's jaw up by his ears, and then slide my thumbs down that crevasse until they are positioned underneath his chin. Establishing this position allows me to manipulate his head, as well as prevent him from defending against the choke by dropping his chin to his chest.



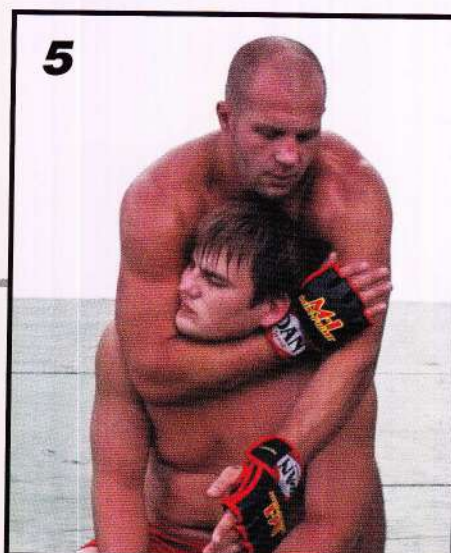
**2** I drive my left thumb upward into Kirill's jaw, forcing his chin to rise and his head to turn to his right side.



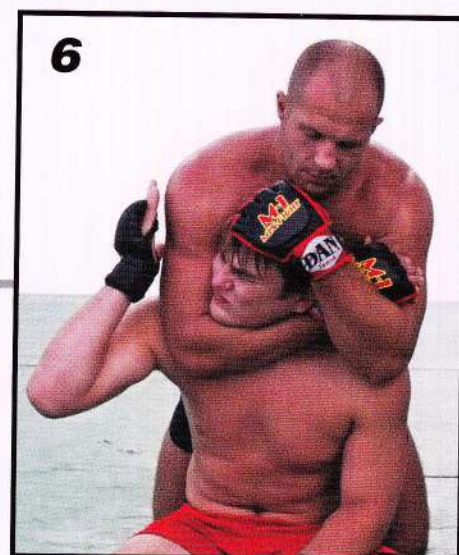
**3** Having created space between Kirill's chin and chest using my left hand, I slide my right arm around his neck.



**4** I hook the crook of my right arm around Kirill's throat.



**5** I grab my left biceps with my right hand.

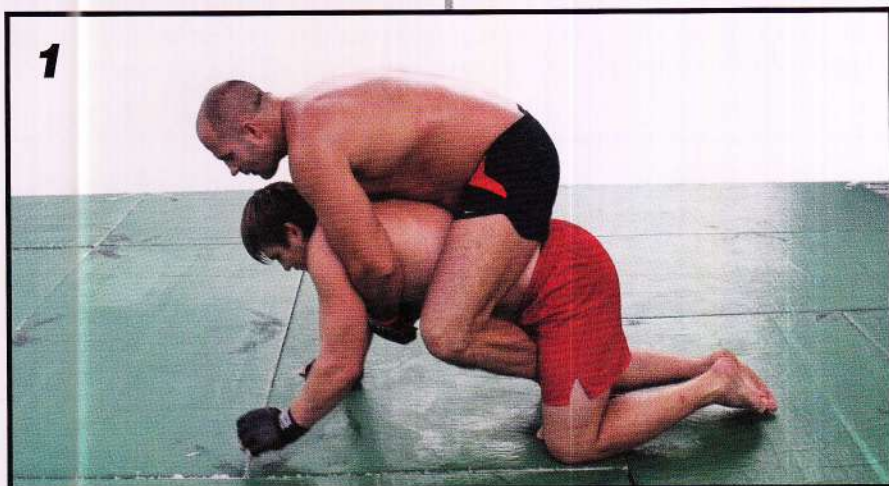


**6** I curl my left arm inward, cup the top of Kirill's head with my left hand, and apply the choke by squeezing my arms tight.

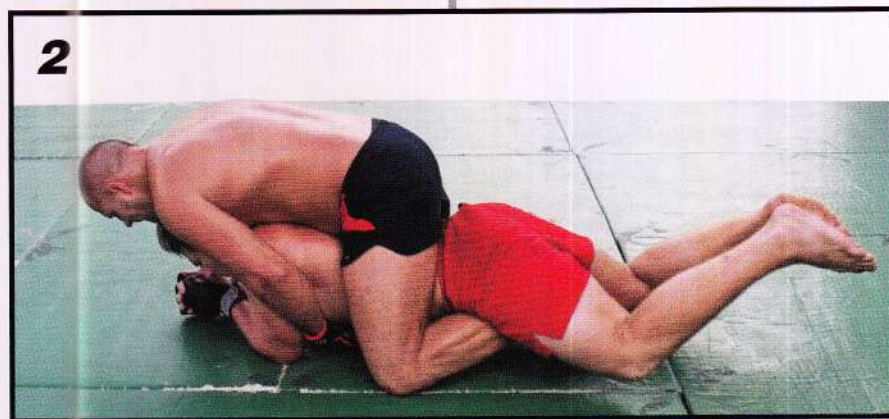
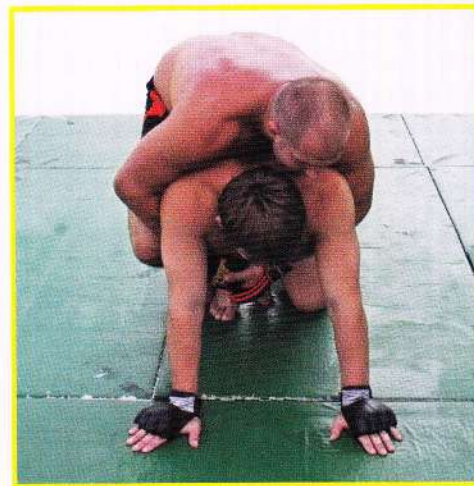


## FLATTEN TO REAR CHOKE

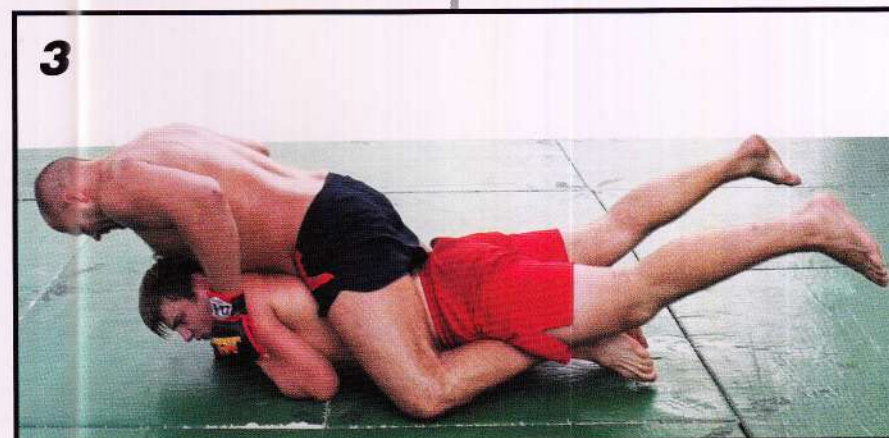
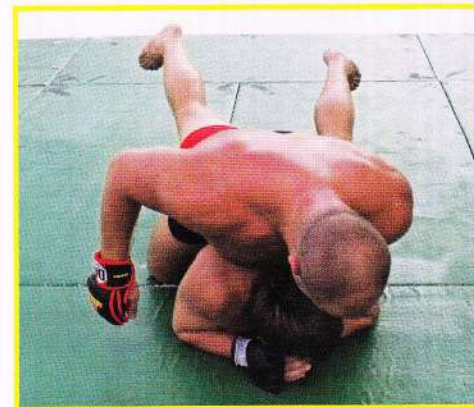
Anytime you secure the rear mount position, flattening your opponent out on the canvas will seriously reduce his chances of escape. In addition to demonstrating how this can be accomplished in the sequence below, I also show how to finish your opponent off with a rear choke once you've forced him face down onto the mat.



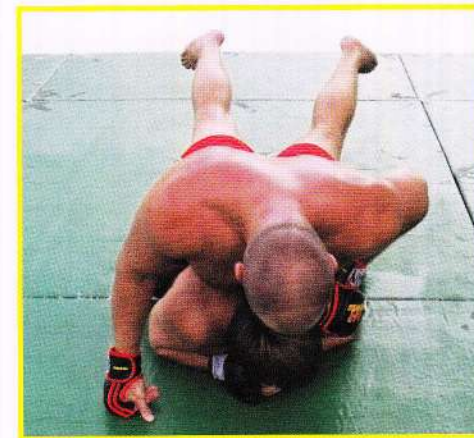
To secure control of Kirill's back, I hook my feet around the inside of his legs, wrap my arms underneath his arms, and grip my hands together in the center of his chest.



Using my double underhook body lock to keep my chest pinned to Kirill's back, I stretch his body out and flatten him to the mat by extending my legs into his legs and driving my hips into his lower back.

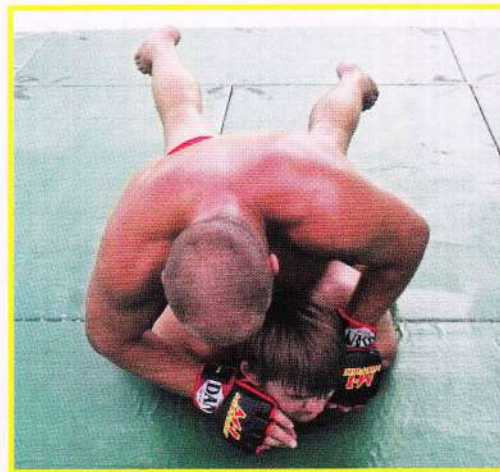
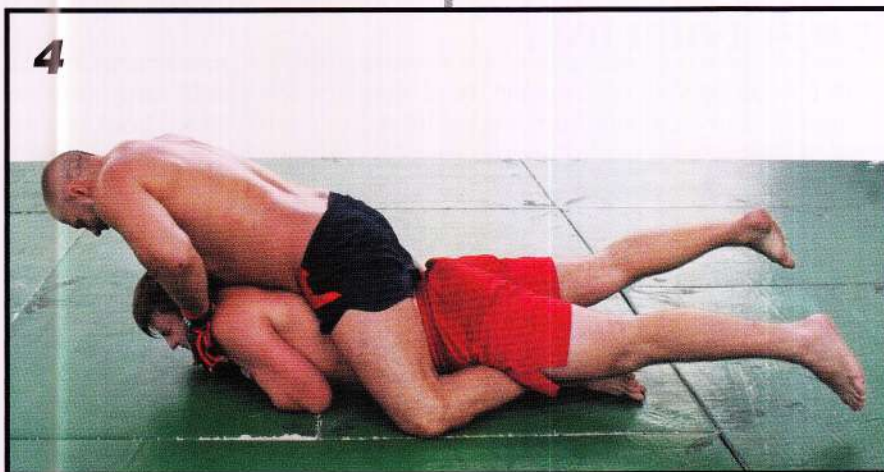


To keep Kirill's body pinned to the mat, I continue to extend my legs into his legs and drive my hips into his lower back. As I do this, I post my right hand on the mat and begin working for a rear choke by jamming my left hand into the crevasse underneath his jaw.



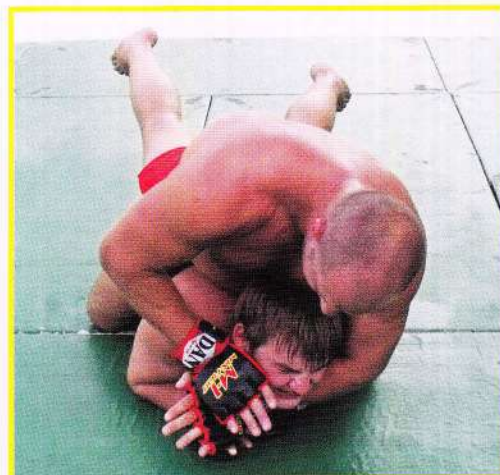
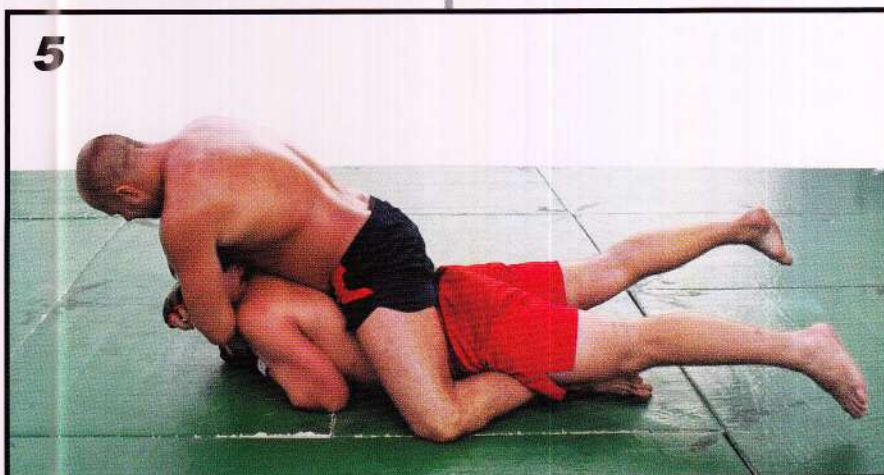


4



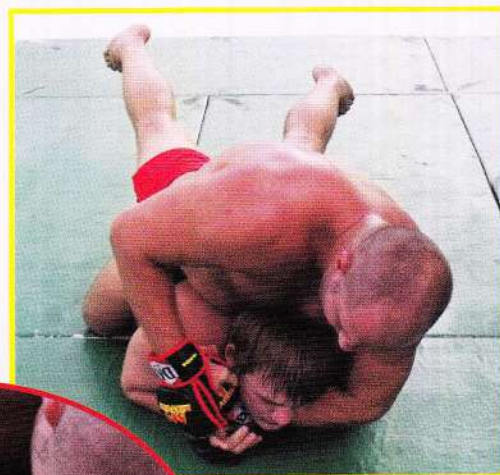
As I slowly work my left hand underneath the left side of Kirill's jaw, I slide my right thumb into the same crevasse on the right side of his jaw, starting at his ear and working down to his throat. This prevents him from defending the choke by driving his chin into his chest and turning his head toward his right side.

5



I slide my left hand underneath Kirill's chin. Notice how I use the inside of my wrist to cut into his throat.

6



I grip my hands together on the right side of Kirill's jaw. To finish the choke, I use my right hand to pull the inside of my left wrist up into his throat.

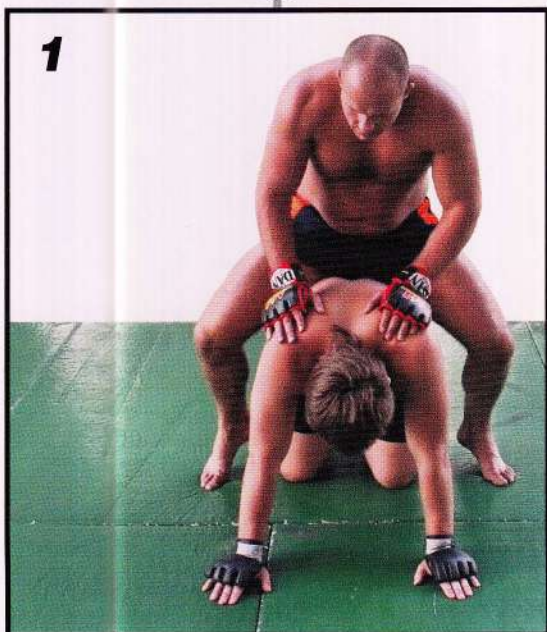




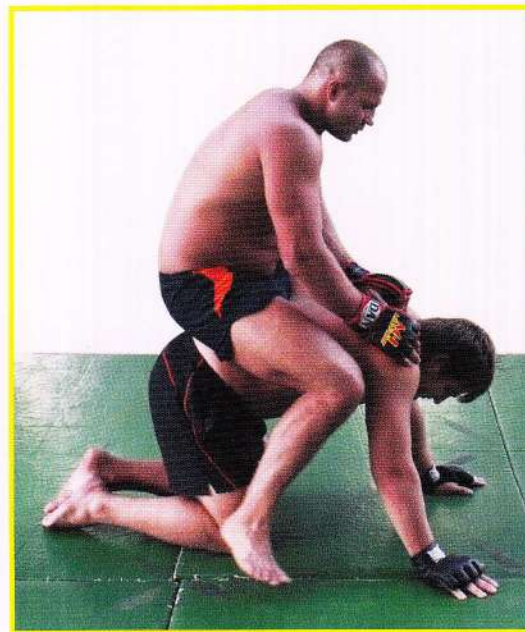
## ARMBAR FROM REAR MOUNT

Earlier in the book I demonstrated several methods for putting your opponent in the all-fours position and taking his back. The majority of the time your best option for submitting your opponent from this position is to establish your hooks on his legs, flatten him out, and apply a rear naked choke, but eventually you're bound to confront a competitor who is a master at defending against the rear naked choke. If you've taken your opponent's back several times in a fight and failed to lock in the choke, it's usually best to switch things up. In this sequence, I opt to apply an armbar instead of the choke. It is the exact same technique as the over-the-back armbar shown earlier—the only difference is that here I apply it from back control instead of when my opponent attempts to escape the mount by rolling. If you've already spent some time drilling the over-the-back armbar, it will help to think of this technique as the upside-down version. Just as before, you want to hook one of your opponent's arms, slide your shin over the back of his head, roll over your shoulder, and then finish the submission by cranking down on his arm. When you execute each of the steps in one fluid motion, a lot of times you'll be able to submit your opponent while he's on his knees as shown below. However, if your opponent attempts to avoid the submission by rolling, you'll want to lock in the armbar as he comes down onto his back, just as you did in the second version of the over-the-back armbar demonstrated earlier.

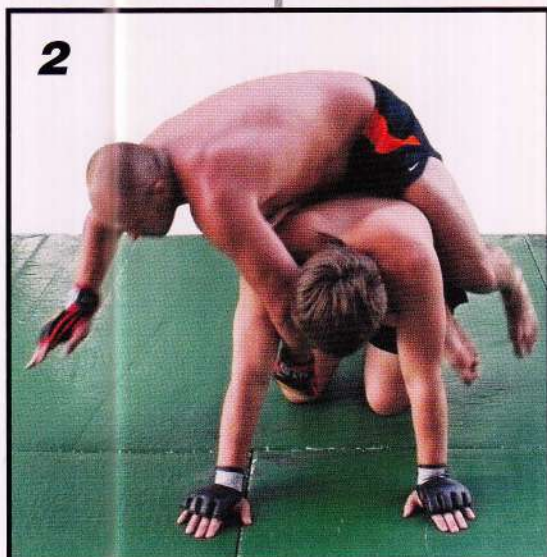
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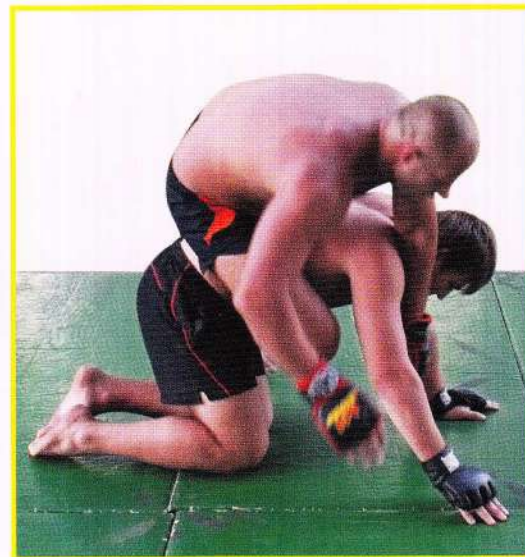
Kirill is on all fours, and I've circled around behind him to secure the rear mount position.



2



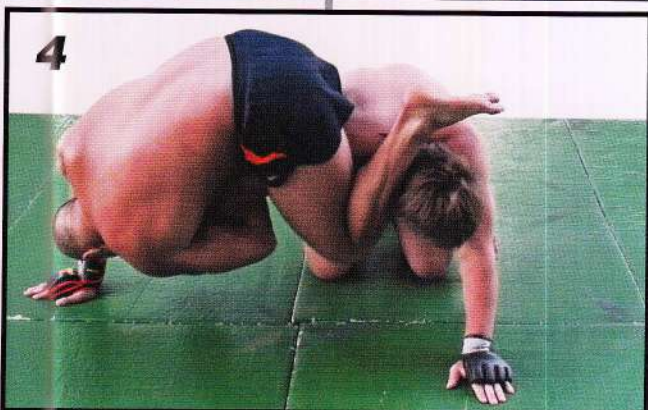
I hook my right leg around Kirill's abdomen, dive my left arm over his right shoulder and underneath his right arm, and fall diagonally toward my right side. To brace my fall, I extend my right arm.



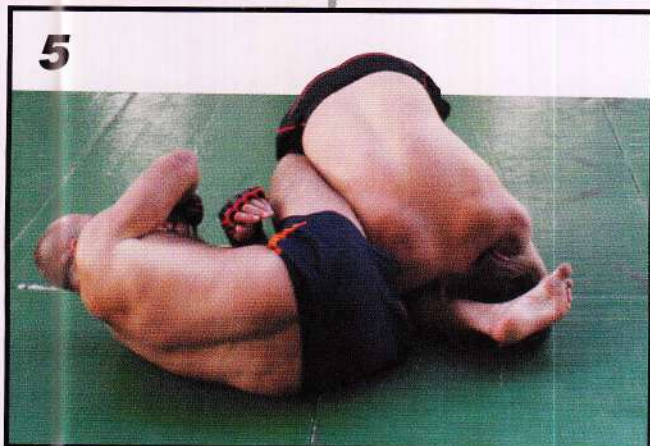




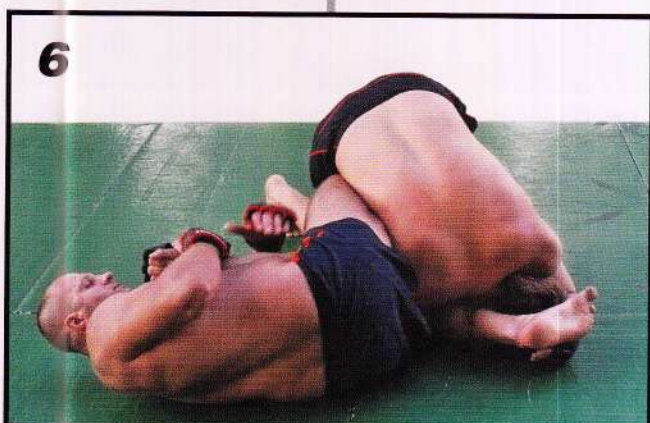
I post my right hand on the mat, hook my left arm around the inside of Kirill right arm, and slide my left shin over the back of his head. Notice how I have lined up the crook of my left arm with the crook of his right arm. This will prevent my opponent from freeing his arm as I roll to my back.



Using my right hand to support my weight, I twist my body in a counterclockwise direction, slide my left shin down the right side of Kirill's face, and pull his right arm into my chest using my left arm.



Keeping Kirill's right arm pinned to my chest using my left arm, I roll over my left shoulder and onto my left side.



I roll toward my back. Before Kirill can attempt to escape the submission by rolling, I finish the armbar by pinching my knees together, grabbing his right wrist with both of my hands, pulling his arm toward my right side, and extending my hips into his elbow.







*Fedor working to escape the rear mount during position sparring.*



# GROUND TECHNIQUES BOTTOM

Over the course of my career, I've fought some of the best wrestlers, judoka, and jiu-jitsu fighters out there. I've also fought men that are nearly twice my size. Even though I've worked tirelessly on my striking and takedown skills, in several of these fights I found myself lying on my back with my opponent on top of me. Training to avoid this type of situation is mandatory, but it is impossible to avoid it all together when you fight on a regular basis. This is especially true when your strategy is built on offense because you're constantly coming forward, making yourself vulnerable to takedowns. In order to survive, you must learn how to fight off your back. This means more than just studying submissions. A lot of competitors who come from a jiu-jitsu background are masters at locking in submissions, but when they are forced to contend with strikes, they freeze up. Having a handful of submissions in your arsenal is not enough. You must learn how to move your hips and create new angles from which to attack. This forces your opponent to spend all of his time trying to catch up to your movement, which makes it very difficult for him to launch an attack of his own. With your opponent always one step behind you, it becomes much easier to catch him with a sweep or submission. To introduce you to the vast arena of techniques that can be utilized while moving and creating new angles off your back, I've included the moves that I've found to work best over the years. I begin with the guard. In addition to showing several guard sweeps, I've included a host of submissions that can be applied from the various angles you can create, including the armbar I used to defeat both Olympic wrestler Mark Coleman and colossus Hong Man Choi. Next, I demonstrate several techniques that can be used to escape both the mount and bottom side control positions. All the techniques covered in this section have been battle tested and work on all body types.



## OVERHAND COUNTER TO KIMURA

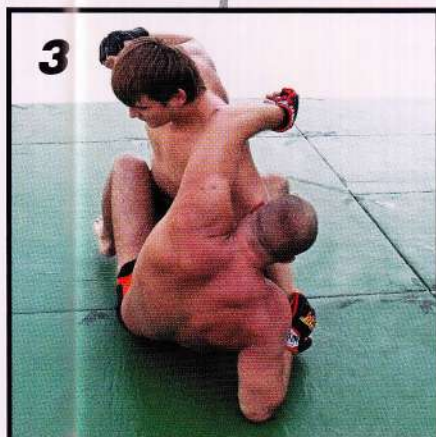
When you break an opponent down in your guard by gripping the back of his head, a lot of times he will place one of his hands on the mat and push off to break your hold and posture up. Although achieving his goal puts him in a perfect position to throw downward strikes with his free hand, it also sets you up perfectly to lock in a kimura on the arm he's using to push off the mat. In order to be successful, you want to apply the submission before your opponent can land his first strike. If he plants his left hand on the mat, this can be accomplished by grabbing his left wrist with your right hand, sitting up with your opponent, reaching your left arm over his left arm, and grabbing your right wrist with your left hand. As long as you act quickly, your opponent will still be driving off his planted hand, which makes it extremely difficult for him to pull his arm into his body to prevent you from establishing the figure-four lock. In addition to these actions, you also want to drive your hips into your opponent's chest as you sit up. If he does nothing to counter your upward movement, you will be able to drive him over to his back and finish the kimura from the top position. If he counters by driving his weight back into you, his movement allows you to rip his hand off the mat and lock in the kimura from your guard, which is what I demonstrate in the sequence below. If you look at the photos, you'll notice that as I apply the submission I scoot my hips out to the same side of my opponent's body as his trapped arm. Assuming this angle provides me with the leverage I need to tighten the kimura like a vise. It's an excellent technique, but it requires some dedication in order to develop the proper timing. If you hesitate when your opponent plants a hand on the mat and postures up, you not only risk losing the submission, but you might also get punched in the face.



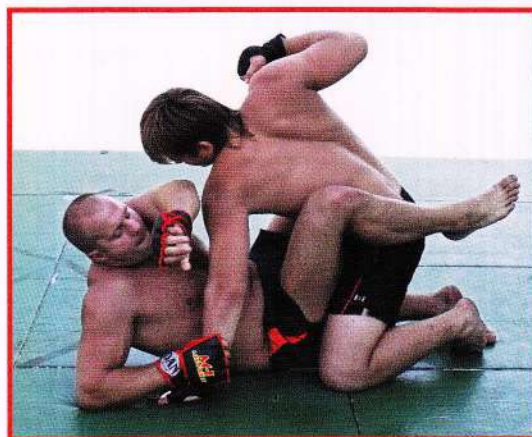
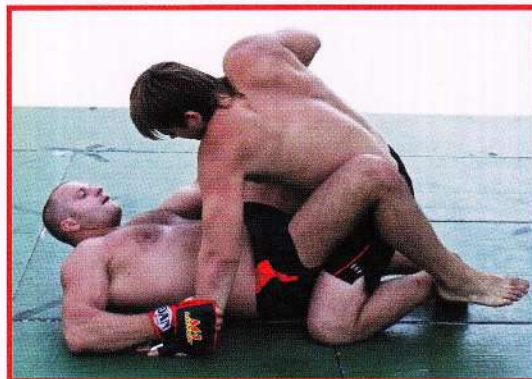
**1** Kirill is in my closed guard, and I'm controlling his posture by cupping the back of his head with my left hand.



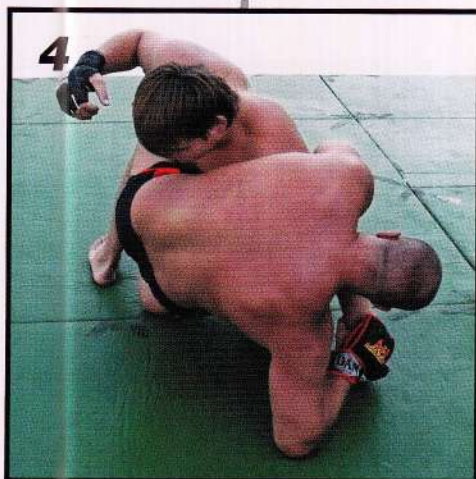
**2** Kirill pushes off the mat with his left hand to break my grip on his head and posture up. The instant he does this, I grab his left wrist with my right hand.



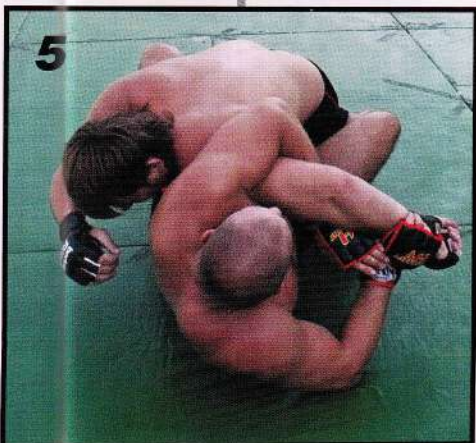
**3** As Kirill cocks his right hand back to throw a punch, I sit up, plant my right elbow on the mat, and reach my left arm over his left shoulder. Notice how my actions have made it a lot more difficult for him to strike me.



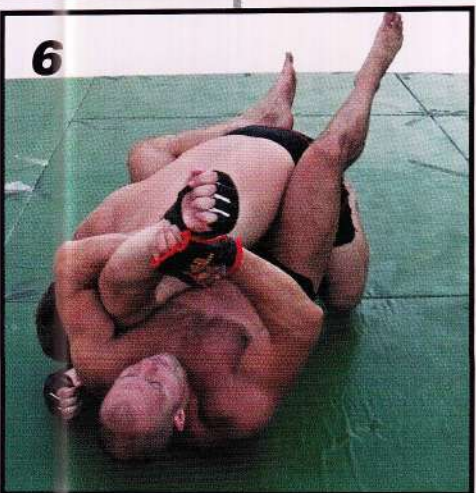




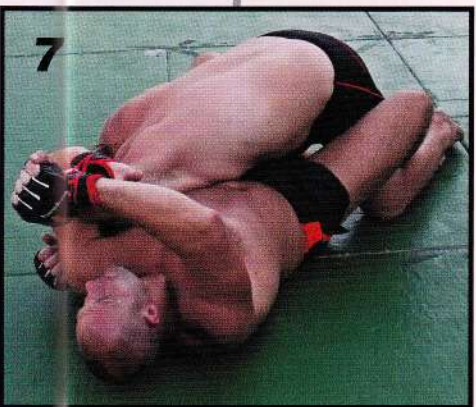
I push off the mat with my left foot, elevate my hips, rotate my body in a clockwise direction, and wrap my left arm around the back of Kirill's left arm. These actions allow me to drive my hips into his midsection, which disrupts his balance and creates the space I need to secure a deep left hook around his arm.



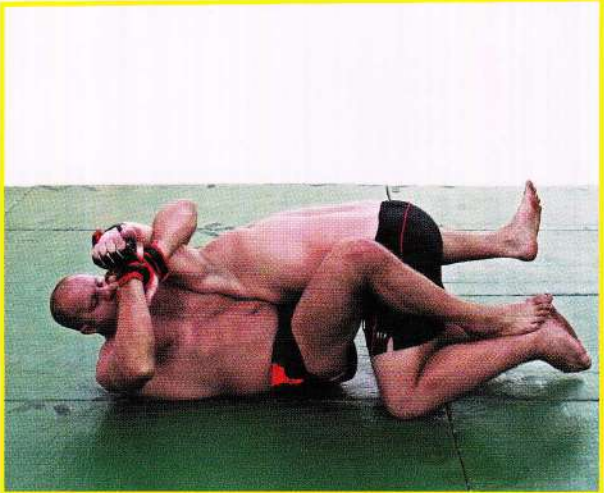
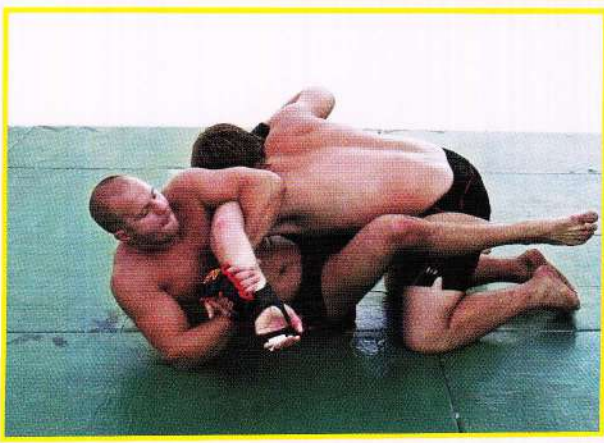
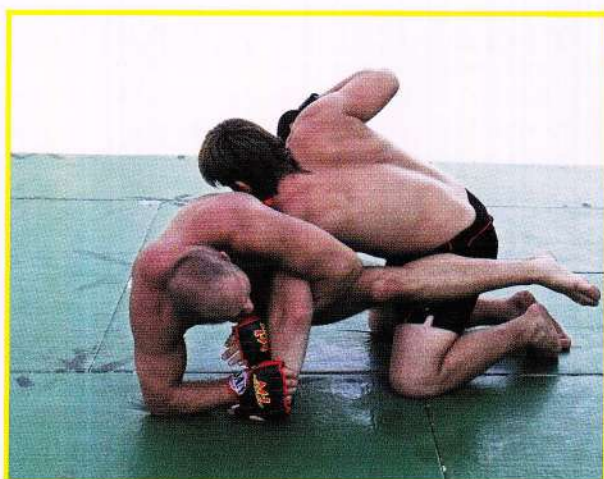
I grab my right wrist with my left hand. Next, I shrimp my hips in a counterclockwise direction, roll onto my right shoulder, push Kirill's left hand toward his legs using my right hand, and pull my left arm into my body. It is very important to notice that as I drop to my back, I scoot my hips out to my right side. This angle provides me with the leverage I need to finish the submission.



Rolling toward my left shoulder, I pull my left arm toward my body and force Kirill's left hand toward his head using my right hand.



As I roll over my left shoulder, I hook my feet over the back of Kirill's legs. To finish the submission, I pull his left elbow toward my body using my left arm and drive his left hand toward his head using my right hand.

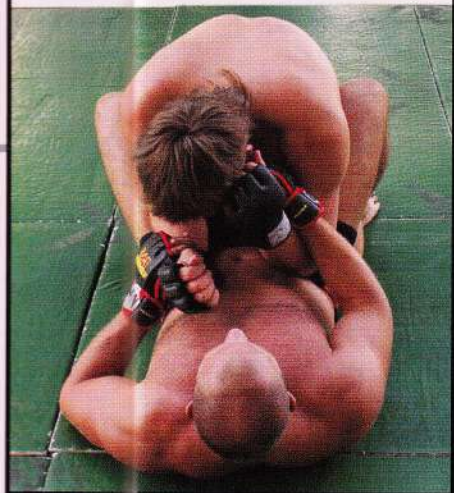




## TRIANGLE ARMBAR

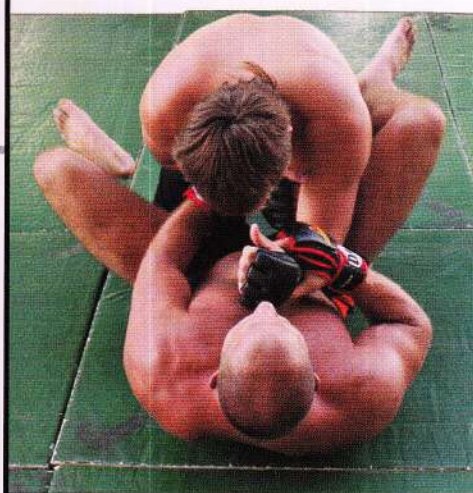
It doesn't matter how good you are at kickboxing or wrestling—at some point during your fighting career, you'll end up on your back. In order to survive, it is mandatory that you understand how to capture your opponent between your legs in the guard position, and then use that position to either sweep him over to his back or lock in a submission hold. Two of the more effective submissions that you can apply from the guard are the triangle choke and an armbar, and in this sequence I demonstrate how to lock them both in at the same time. This is the ideal scenario because when you attack two separate parts of your opponent's body at once, you dramatically reduce his chances of escape. Even if you can't apply both submissions simultaneously, it is important to understand how they can work together. Generally, you want to isolate your opponent's head and one of his arms between your legs and attempt to finish him with the triangle first. If he senses the submission and postures up, finishing the triangle can be difficult. In such a case, you can immediately transition to the armbar. If he counters the armbar by dropping his weight, you can once again apply the triangle. The ultimate goal is to hyperextend your opponent's arm and choke him unconscious at the same time, but sometimes you have to take what is available.

1



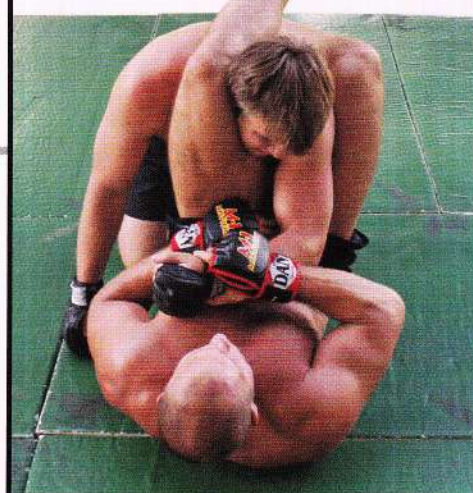
Kirill is in my open guard, and I'm controlling his right wrist with my left hand and his left wrist with my right hand.

2



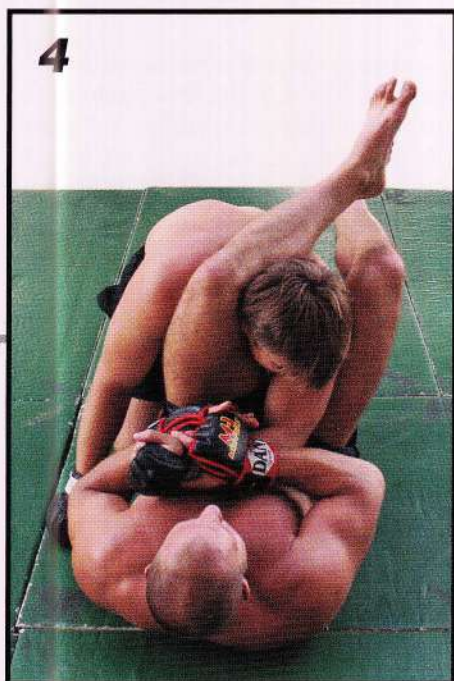
I push Kirill's right arm toward his hips using my left hand, pull his left arm to my chest using my right hand, and swing my left leg toward the right side of his head.

3

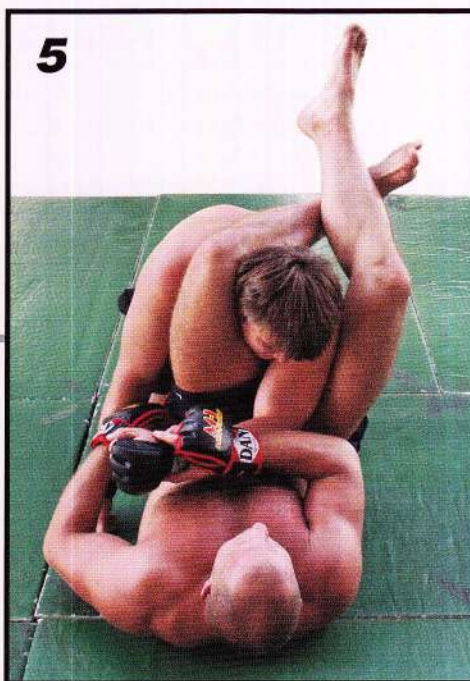


In one fluid motion, I hook my left leg around the right side of Kirill's head, wrap my right leg around his back and curl my leg downward, elevate my hips, and begin pushing his left arm toward my left side using my right hand.

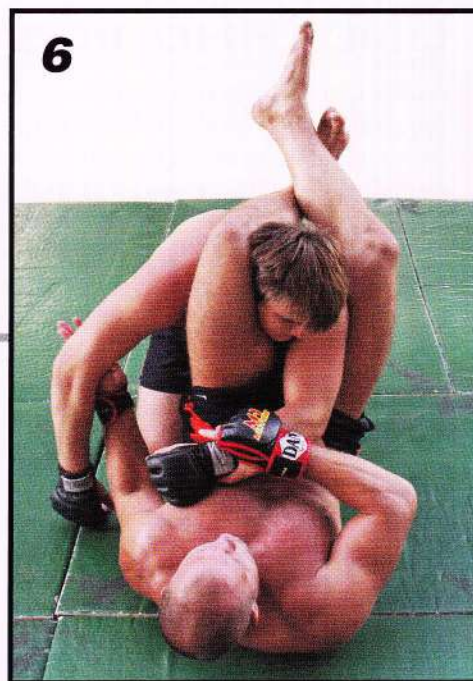




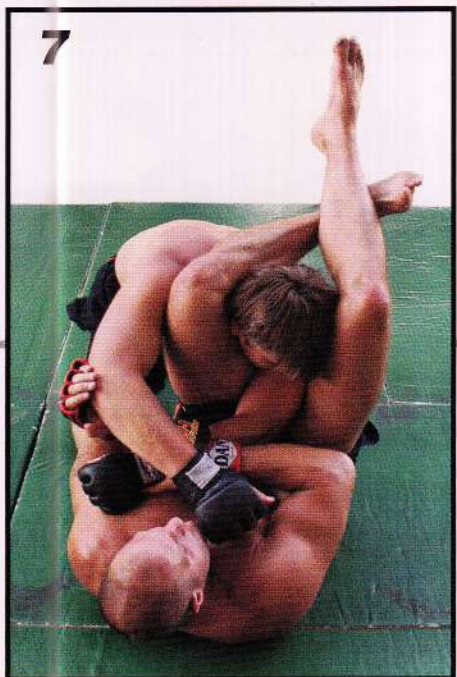
Continuing to push Kirill's left arm toward my left side using my right hand, I apply downward pressure to the back of his head using my left leg to prevent him from posturing up. At the same time, I begin circling my right leg around to the front of my left foot.



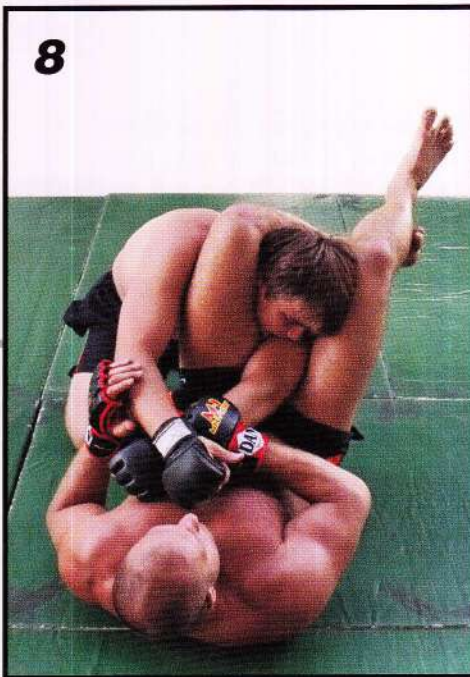
I hook my right leg over my left instep. To prevent Kirill from posturing up and escaping the submission, I curl my right leg into my left leg, which in turn forces my left leg down into the back of his head.



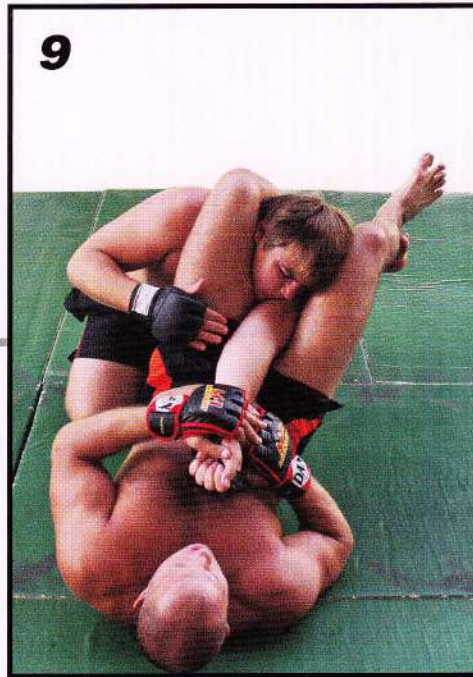
Still applying downward pressure with both of my legs, I hook the back of Kirill's right elbow with my left hand to prevent him from planting his right hand on the mat and then using that base to help him posture up. This action also tilts his upper body toward my right side, which will allow me to scoot my hips underneath his left arm and secure the submissions.



Continuing to curl both of my legs downward, I pull Kirill's left arm toward my left shoulder using my right hand, push up on his right elbow with my left hand, and rotate my hips in a clockwise direction.



Maintaining control of Kirill's left wrist with my right hand, I wrap my left leg around the back of his head and hook the crook of my right leg around my left instep. Assuming this position would allow me to finish the triangle choke by curling my legs inward and squeezing my knees together, but I decide instead to submit him with the armbar.

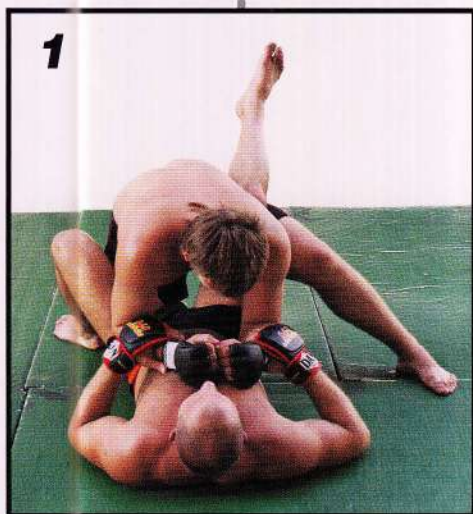


I grab Kirill's left arm with my left hand and then use both of my grips to pull his arm into my chest. To finish the armbar, I elevate my hips into his elbow. It is important to notice how I continue to apply the triangle choke by curling both of my legs inward and squeezing my knees together. By applying both submissions at the same time, my opponent has little chance of escape.

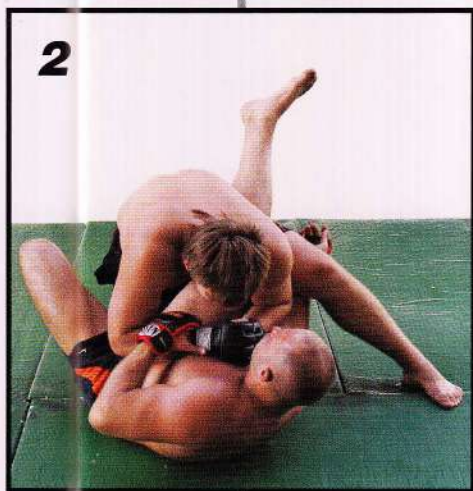
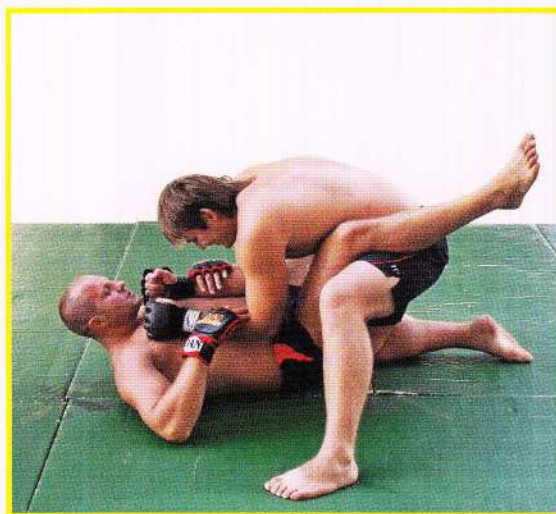


## UNDERHOOK SWEEP TO ARMBAR

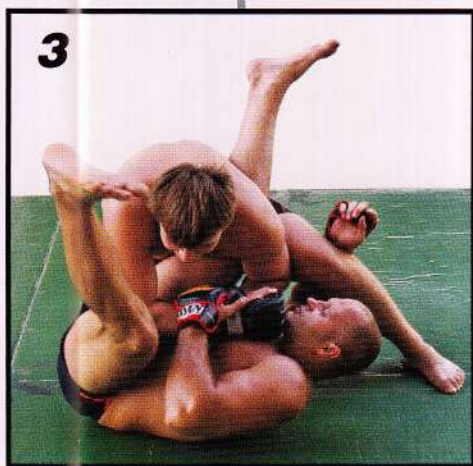
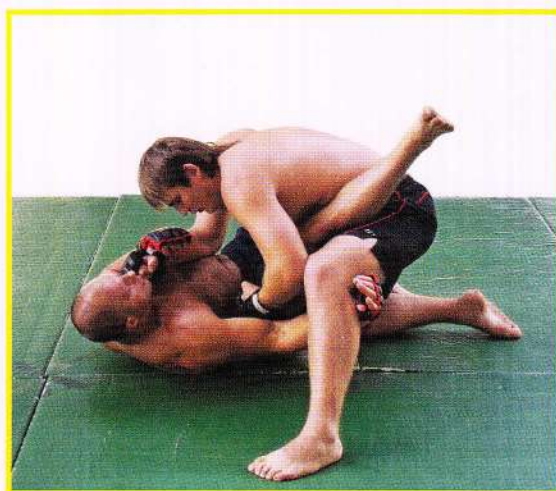
As the name implies, this technique is both a sweep and a submission rolled into one. If you look at the first photo in the sequence below, you'll notice that my opponent has posted his left foot on the mat to widen his base while in my guard. Although his positioning might feel more stable and less vulnerable to sweeps, he has given me access to his left leg. To capitalize, I obtain control of his right arm with my left hand, hook my right arm around his left leg, and then use my new anchor to pull my upper body toward his left leg. This puts my body perpendicular to my opponent's body and provides me with the proper angle to attack his trapped arm. Keeping his right arm pinned to my chest, I throw my far leg around to the near side of his head and then use my legs to drive him over to his back. As you can see later in the sequence, I secure the armbar the instant he lands. If you can't drive your opponent over to his back using your legs, it's possible to finish him with the armbar while he's still in your guard, but your opponent will often counter by driving his weight down and stacking you. The key to success with this technique is to execute the spin, sweep, and armbar all in one fluid motion.



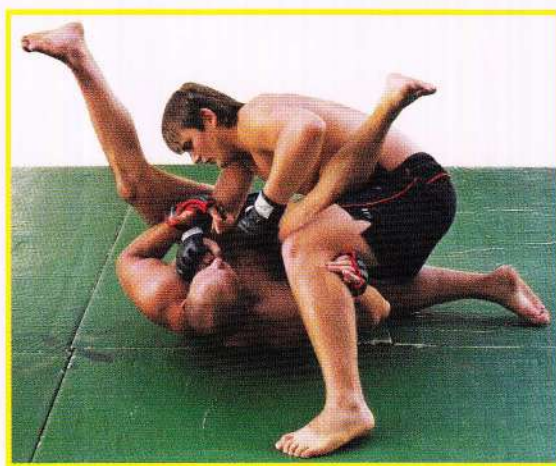
Kirill is in my open guard. He is posting on his left foot and has both of his hands resting on my chest.



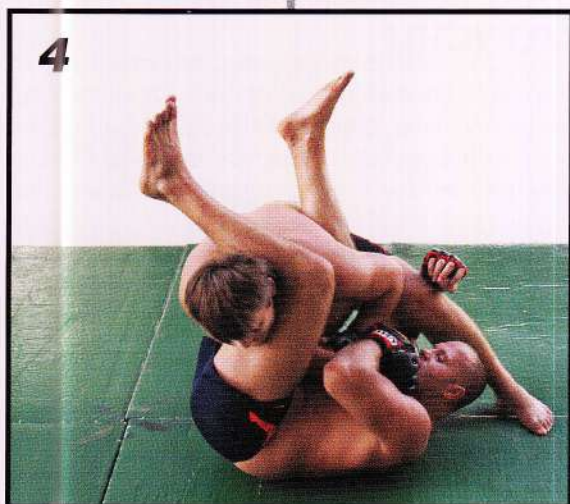
Maintaining my left grip on Kirill's right arm, I reach my right hand underneath his left leg and cup the back of his knee. Next, I use my grip on his leg to help spin my head toward his left leg, as well as scoot my hips toward my left side.



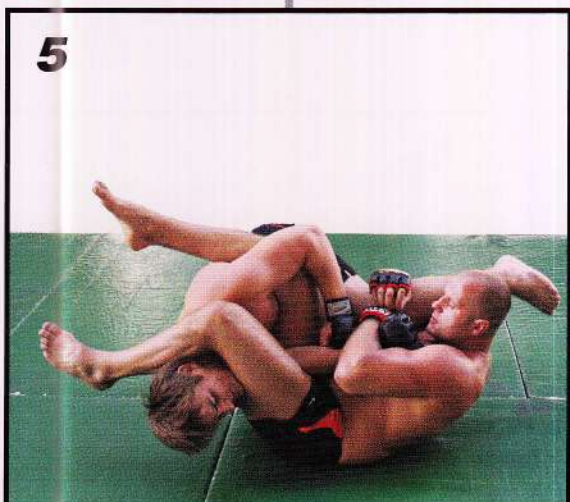
Continuing to pin Kirill's right arm to my chest and pull my head toward his left leg, I begin moving my left leg toward the right side of his head. Notice that by spinning my body in a counterclockwise direction I'm positioning my hips behind his right arm.



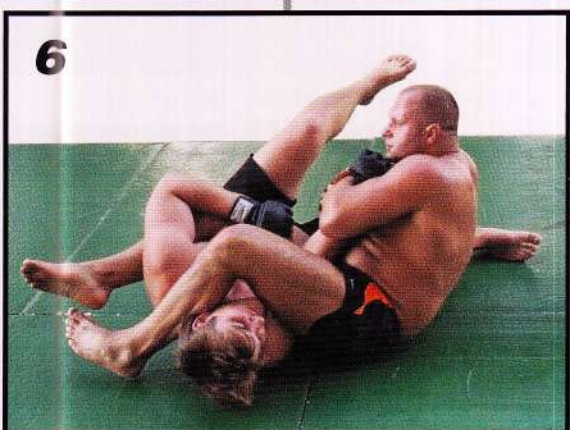




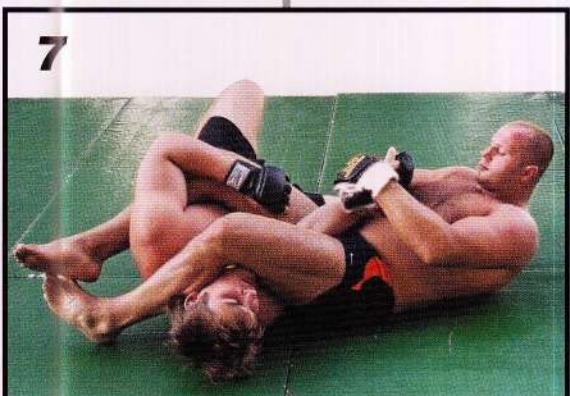
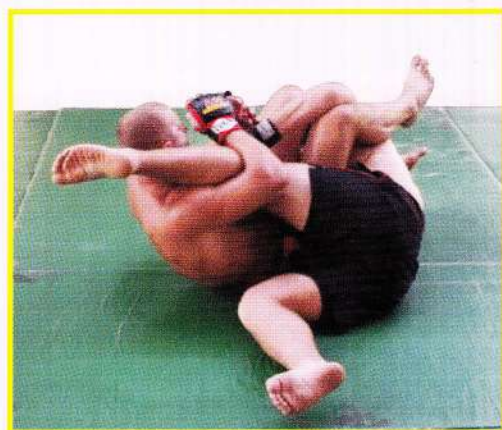
I wrap my left leg around the left side of Kirill's head and hook my right arm deeper around the back of his left leg. Notice how the crook of my right arm is lined up with the crook of his left leg.



I apply downward pressure to the back of Kirill's head using my left leg and drive my right leg into his left armpit. At the same time, I sweep his left leg off the mat by pulling it over my right shoulder. It is important to keep your opponent's trapped arm locked to your chest as you run through this step.



Having stripped Kirill of his base, I sit up and drive him to his back using my legs.

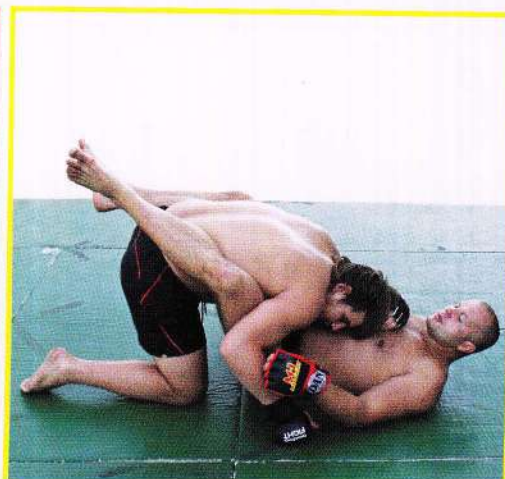
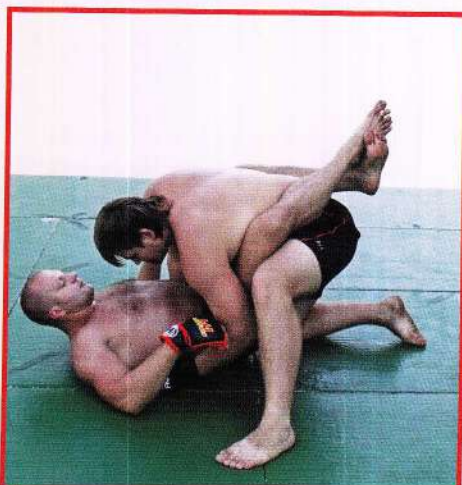
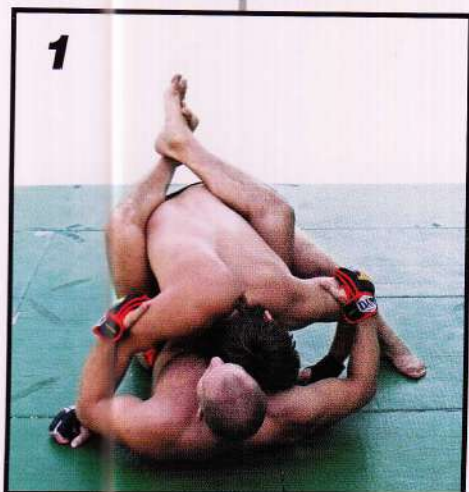


As I force Kirill to his back, I release control of his left leg and double up on his right wrist with both of my hands. To finish the armbar, I cross my right foot over my left foot, roll to my back, and elevate my hips into his right elbow. With this last step, it is very important to curl your legs down into your opponent's body to keep him pinned to the mat. If you allow him to get up to his knees, his chances of escape increase dramatically.

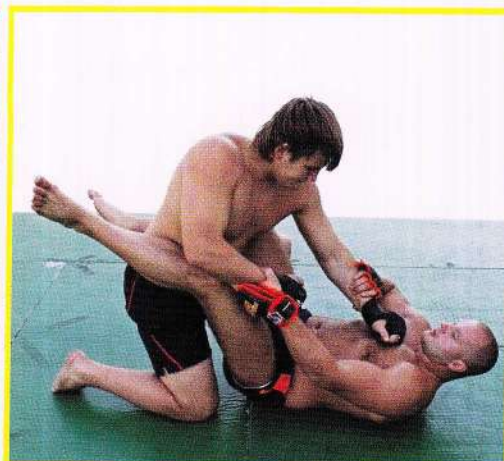
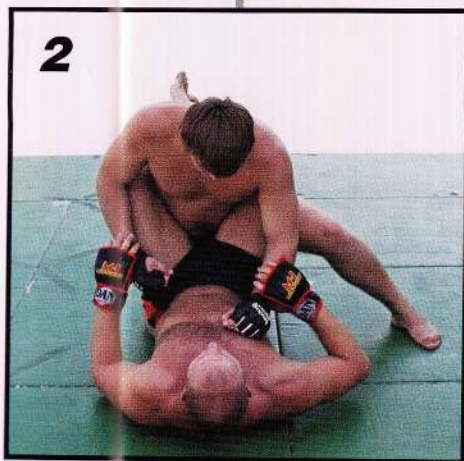


## ARMBAR FROM GUARD VARIATION

When an opponent in your guard posts a foot on the mat to widen his base, you have a couple of options for submitting him with an armbar. Although both involve turning your body perpendicular to your opponent's body and attacking his far arm, they take you in different directions. The option I demonstrated in the previous sequence involved turning toward the leg your opponent elevated off the mat, and the option I demonstrate below involves turning toward the leg your opponent is kneeling on. The primary difference with this version is that it's very difficult to force your opponent to his back because he can brace himself against the roll with his posted leg. Instead of wasting energy needlessly trying to drive him over, continue to rotate your body underneath him. If you look at the photos, you'll notice that I make nearly a 360-degree rotation. The instant I complete this rotation and near my starting position, I'm in the perfect position to finish my opponent with the armbar. If your opponent rolls to his back in an attempt to escape the submission, pinch your knees together and continue to hyperextend his arm. When done right, your opponent will tap before his legs reach the mat. This version is slightly more difficult to pull off than the previous one, but it is a lot less predictable.

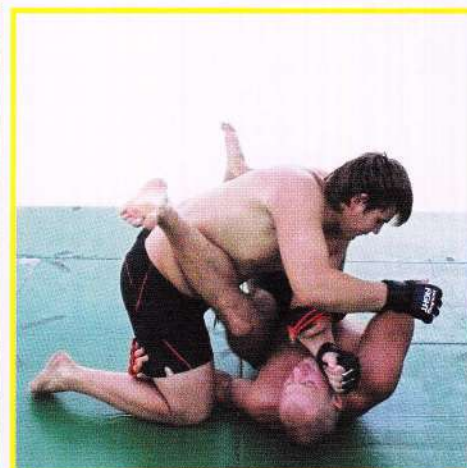
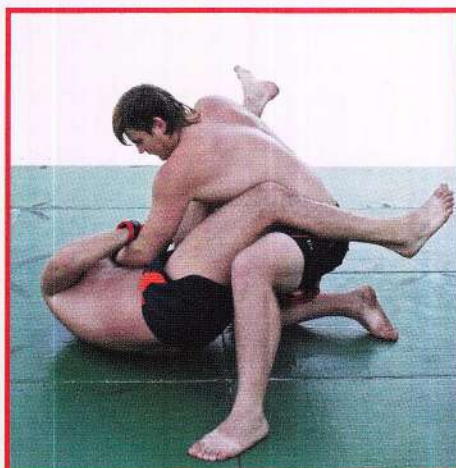
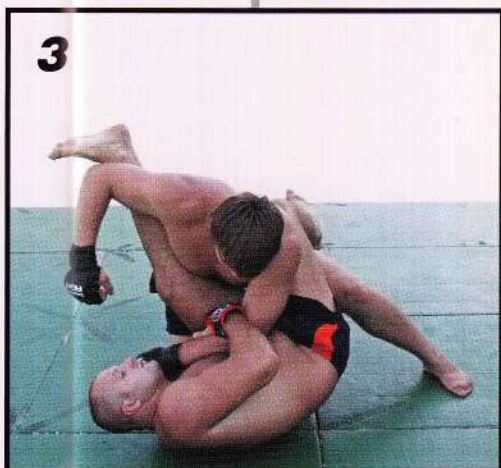


I have Kirill broken down in my closed guard. To widen his base and hinder me from sweeping him to his back, he has posted his left foot on the mat.

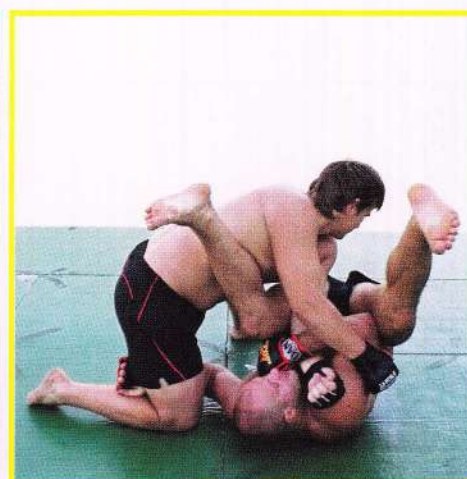
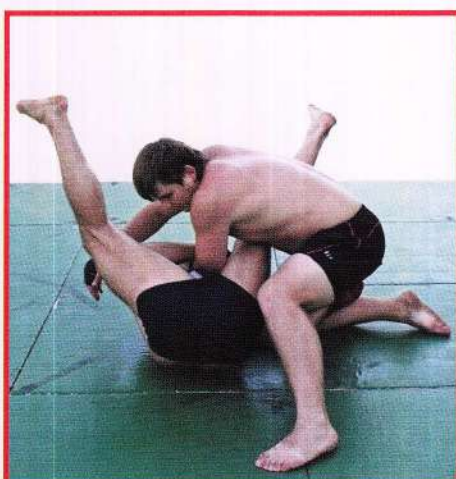
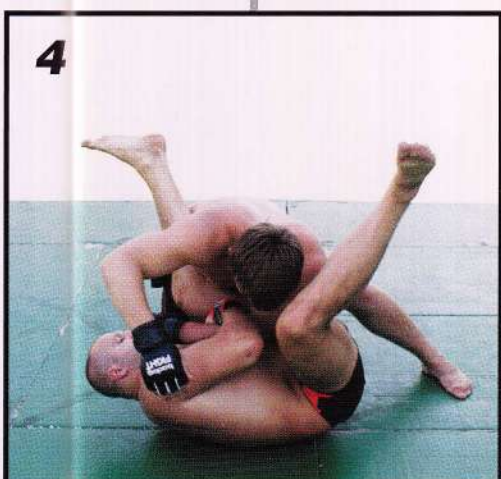


As Kirill postures up to get his offense going, I grab his left wrist with my right hand.

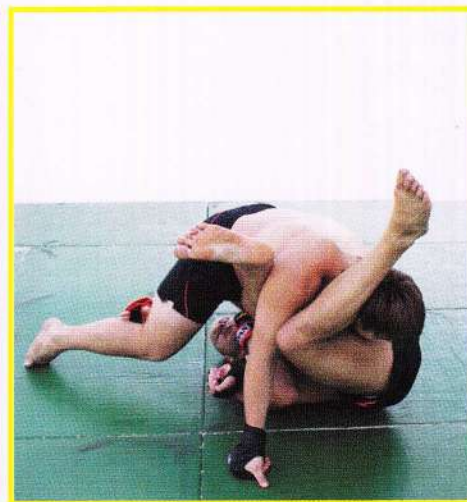
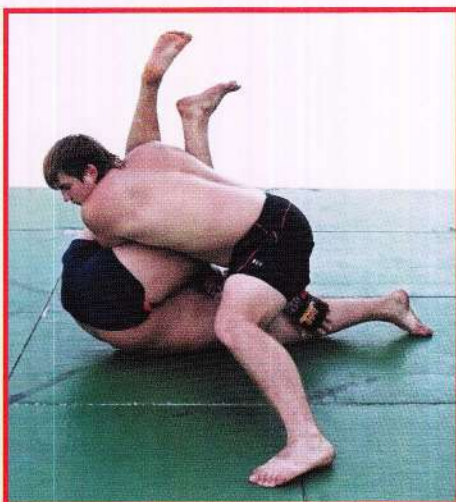
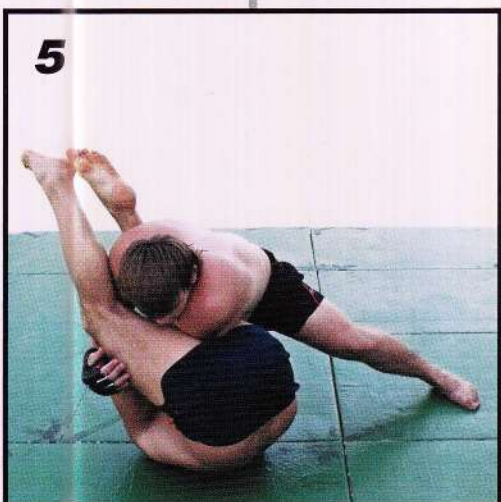




Kirill draws his right arm back to punch. Before he can throw his first strike, I shrink my hips in a clockwise direction and hook my left hand around the inside of his right thigh. Next, I use my grip on his leg to help turn my body toward his legs.



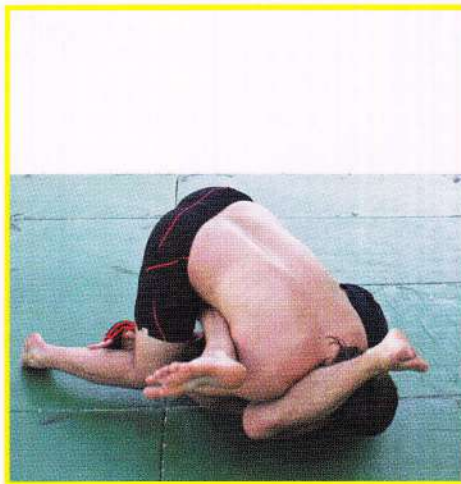
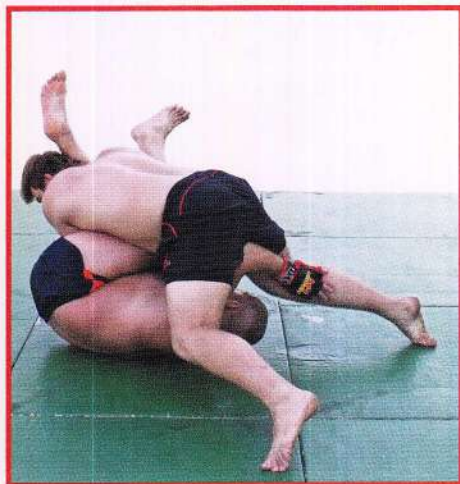
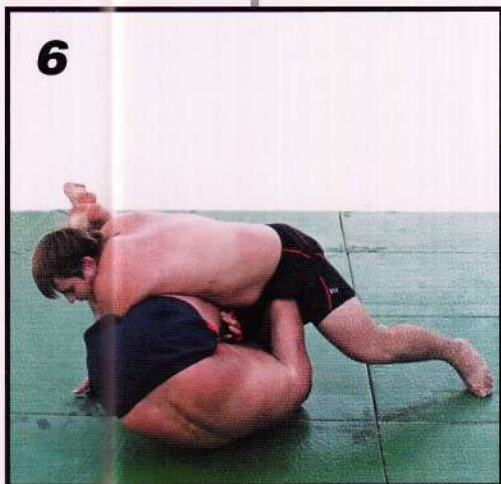
Continuing to turn my body in a clockwise direction, I move my right leg toward the right side of Kirill's head. Notice how my hips are now lined up with the back of Kirill's left arm.



I elevate my hips and hook my right leg around the right side of Kirill's head. It is important to notice that I'm still pinning his left arm to my chest using my right hand.

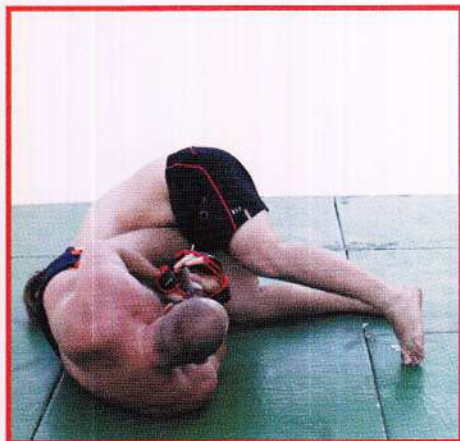


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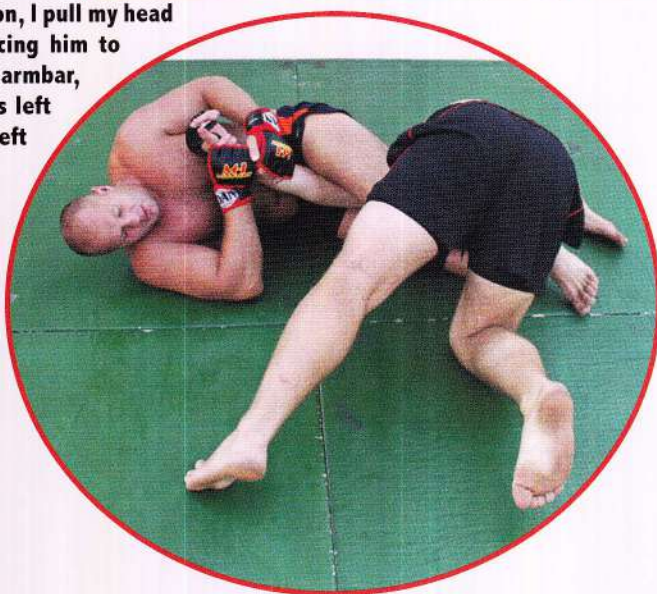


Curling both legs inward, I continue to spin in a clockwise direction by pushing off Kirill's right leg using my left hand. Notice how all of his weight is distributed over my legs. Once I complete my rotation and pull my head out from underneath his body, he'll have nowhere to rest his weight and will fall face first to the mat.

7



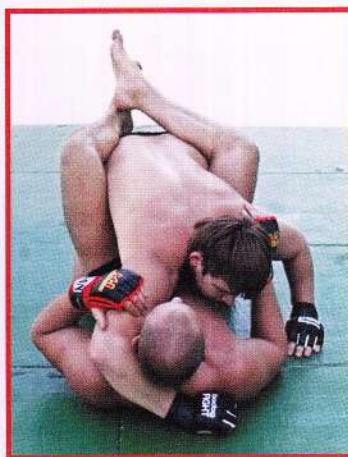
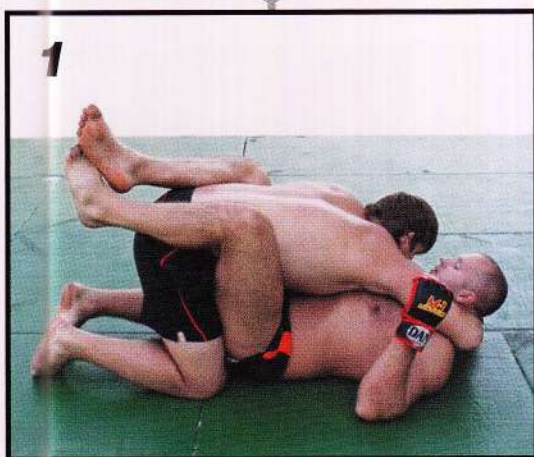
Continuing to spin in a clockwise direction, I pull my head out from underneath Kirill's body, forcing him to fall to his right shoulder. To finish the armbar, I arch backward, thrust my hips into his left elbow, and pull his left arm over my left leg using both of my hands.



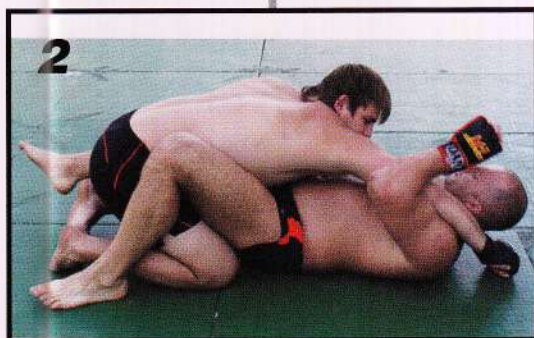


## OVER-THE-BACK ARMBAR

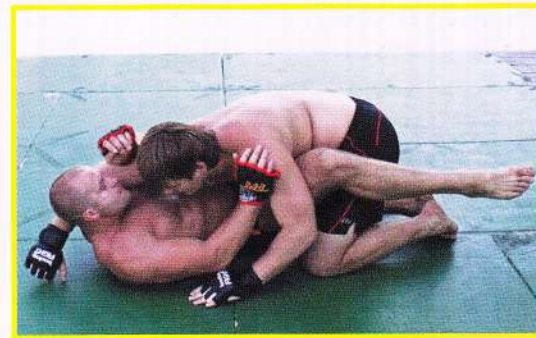
Earlier in the book I demonstrated how to execute the over-the-back armbar from both the mount and rear mount—in this sequence I demonstrate how to apply it on an opponent in your guard. The ideal time to utilize this technique is when your opponent drives his weight forward and wraps one of his arms around the back of your head. In this particular case, my opponent wraps his right arm around the back of my head. The instant he does this, I hook my left arm over his right arm and shrimp my hips toward my left side. This gives me an inverted armbar on my opponent, as you can see in the third step below. Although it's possible to submit your opponent with the inverted armbar off your back, it can be difficult to accomplish when sweaty due to the lack of friction. However, transitioning from the inverted armbar to the over-the-back armbar dramatically increases your chances of finishing your opponent. In the sequence below, I accomplish this by coming up onto my knees and elbows to get behind my opponent's trapped arm. At the same time, I place my left shin on the back of his head. Once I assume this position, I roll over my left shoulder and lock in the armbar. Usually one of two things will happen. Because your actions have stretched out your opponent, most of the time his head will slam into the mat, allowing you to finish him while he's on his knees. However, occasionally your opponent will have the base he needs to roll over to his back. As long as you maintain control of his trapped arm, you'll be able to submit him with the armbar the instant he lands—sometimes even before he lands.



Broken down in my closed guard, Kirill leans his weight forward and wraps his right arm around the back of my head. Although his goal is to obtain better control of my body, I can use his positioning to execute a number of different attacks, including an over-the-back armbar, a hip sweep, and side choke. In this scenario, I decide to execute an over-the-back armbar.



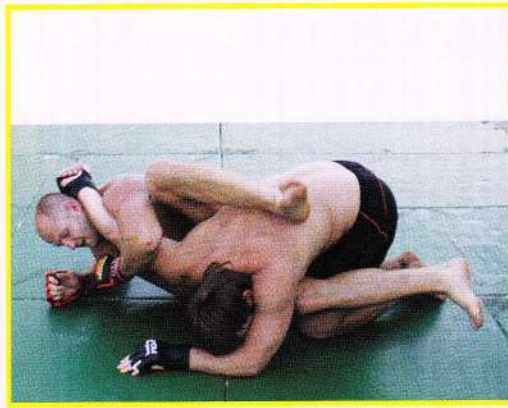
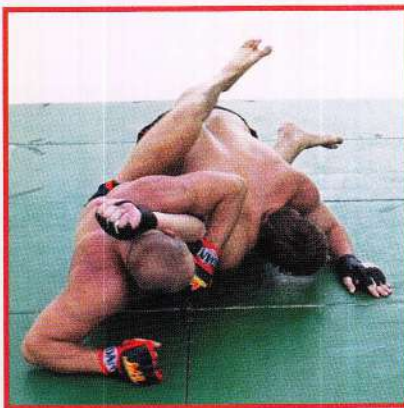
I open my guard and wrap my left arm over Kirill's right triceps. It is important not to get too high or low on your opponent's arm—you want the crook of your arm positioned just above his elbow. Assuming this position will allow you to straighten your opponent's arm and keep it extended as you transition into the armbar.



Keeping my left arm wrapped around the back of Kirill's right arm, I drive off the mat with my left foot and shrimp my hips toward my left side. Next, I throw my left leg over his back.

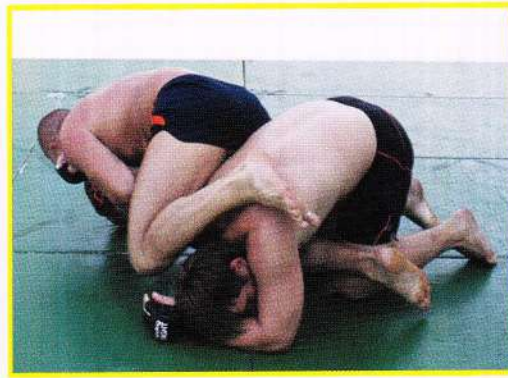
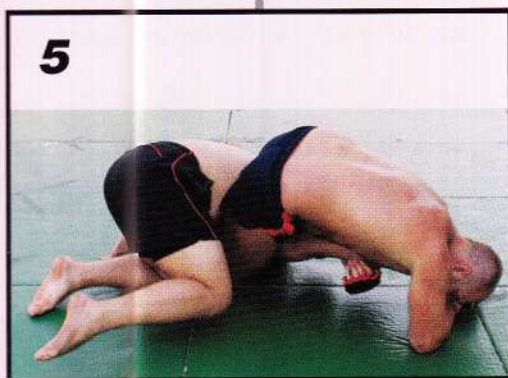


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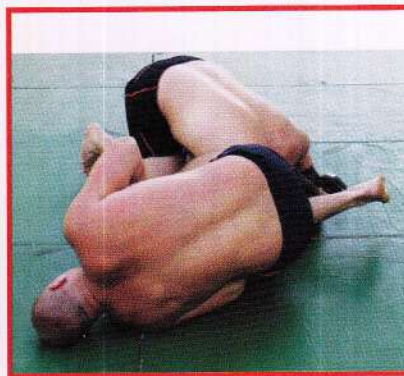
I post my right elbow on the mat, turn onto my right side, and throw my left leg over Kirill's back. Notice how I have maintained tight control of his right arm.

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I place my left shin on the back of Kirill's head and post my left knee on the mat.

6



Keeping my left arm hooked deep around the inside of Kirill's right arm, I roll onto my right shoulder.

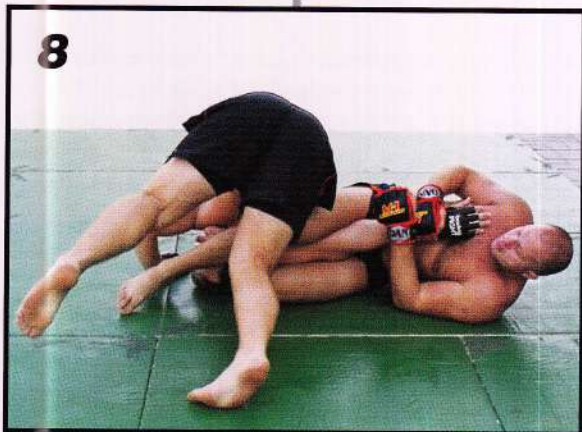
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I drop to my right side and grab Kirill's right arm with my left hand. Immediately I try to finish the submission by pulling his right arm into my chest with both of my hands.

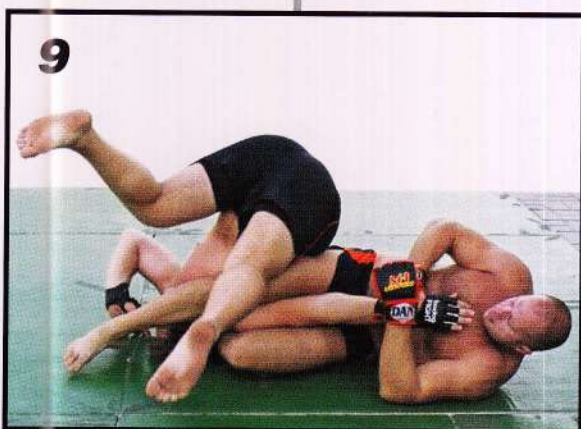


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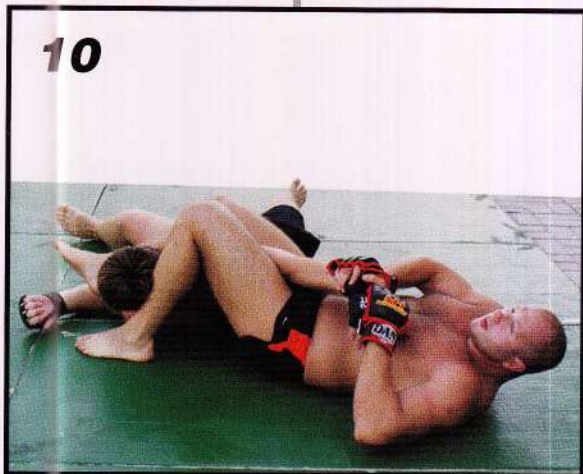
In an attempt to escape the armbar, Kirill drives off the mat with his right foot and rolls over his right shoulder.

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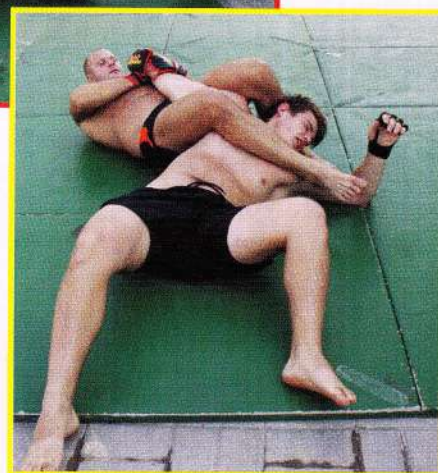


As Kirill rolls over his right shoulder, notice how I keep his right arm extended. This will allow me to finish the submission the instant he lands.

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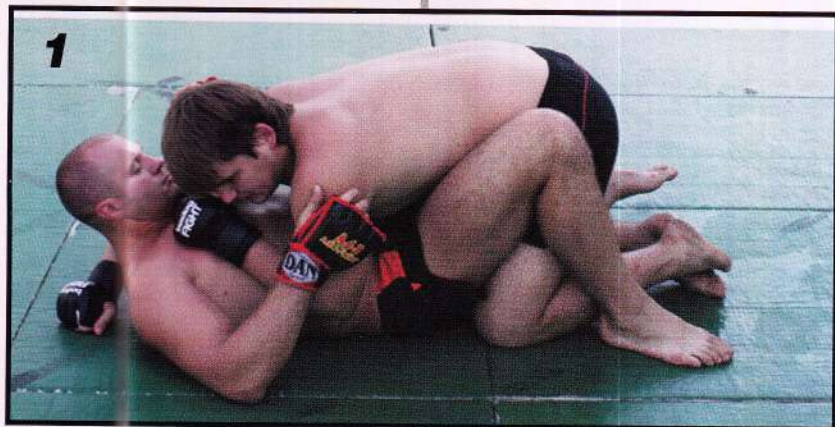
As Kirill lands on his back, I finish the armbar by pinching my knees together, elevating my hips into his right elbow, and pulling his right arm over my left thigh.



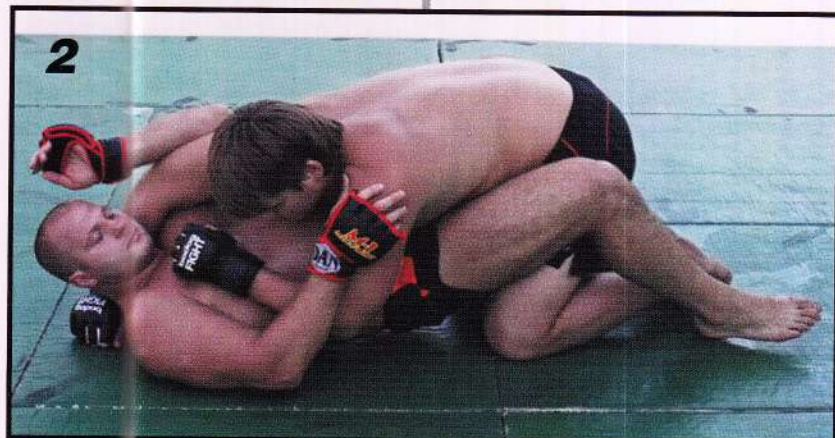
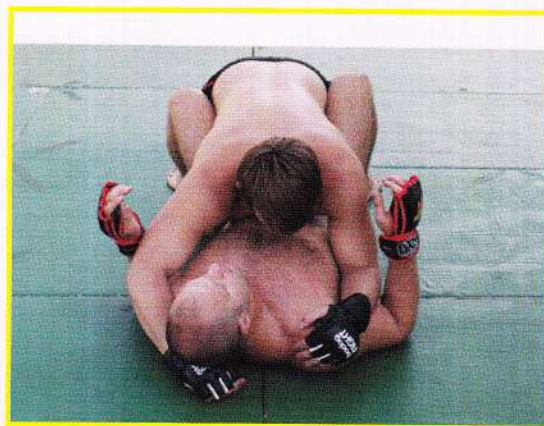


## HIP SWEEP

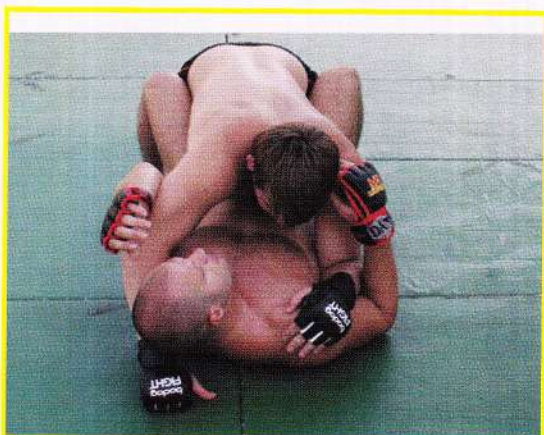
The hip sweep is another option for when an opponent in your guard wraps his arm around the back of your head. It is set up exactly the same as the over-the-back armbar—controlling one of your opponent's arms, you scoot your hips out to the side and throw a leg over his back. However, instead of sliding your shin over the back of his head and extending his arm for the armbar, you drive your hips into his body and trip him with your grounded leg. The combination of these actions forces him into a forward roll and allows you to secure the mount position. This hip sweep can be used as a straight-up attack, and it can also be used when your opponent counters the over-the-back armbar by ducking his head and rolling over his shoulder.



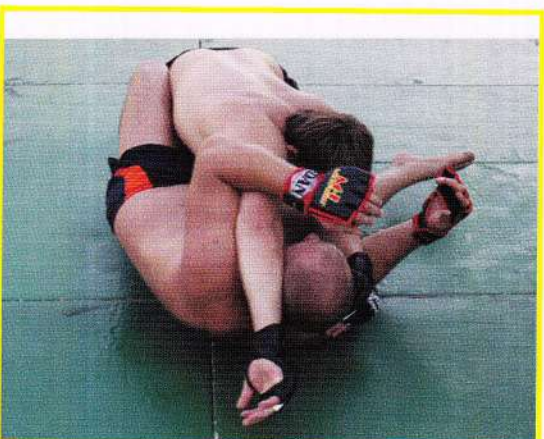
Kirill is in my open guard with his right arm wrapped around the back of my head.



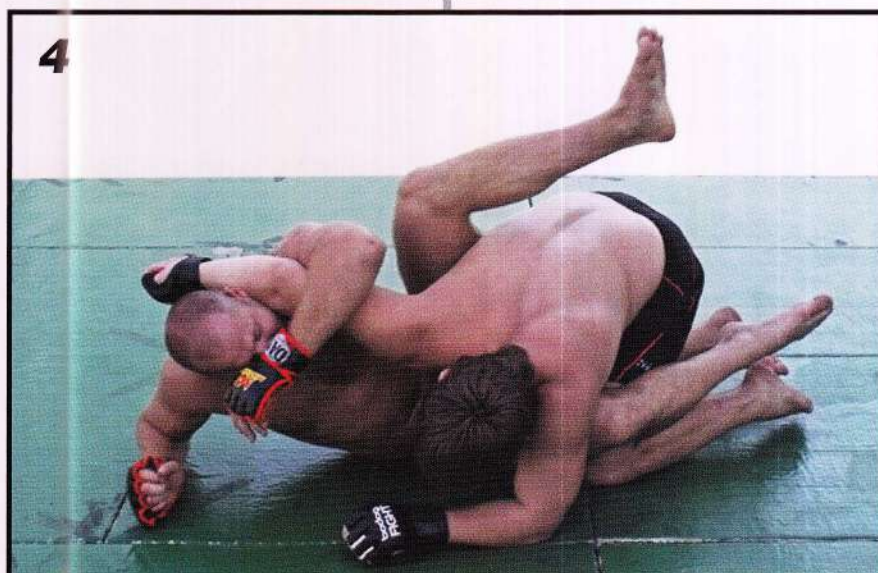
I wrap the crook of my left arm around the back of Kirill's right arm just above his elbow. This control will allow me to straighten his arm and keep it extended as I execute the hip sweep.



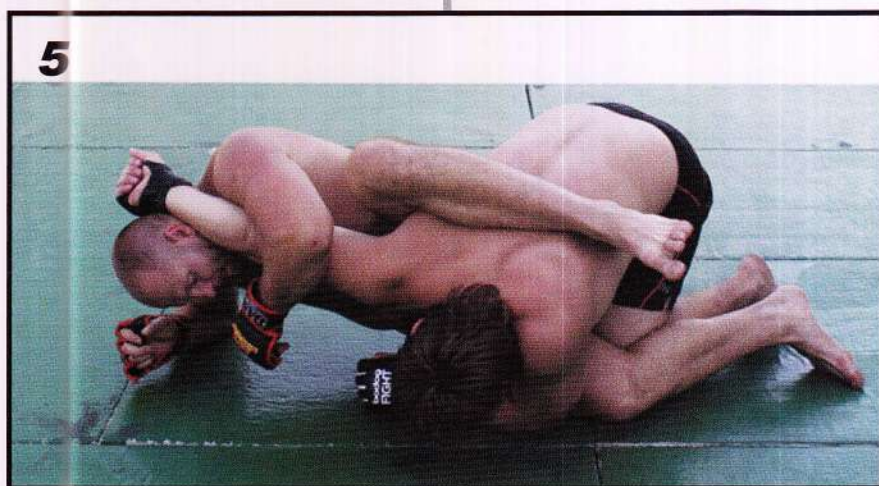
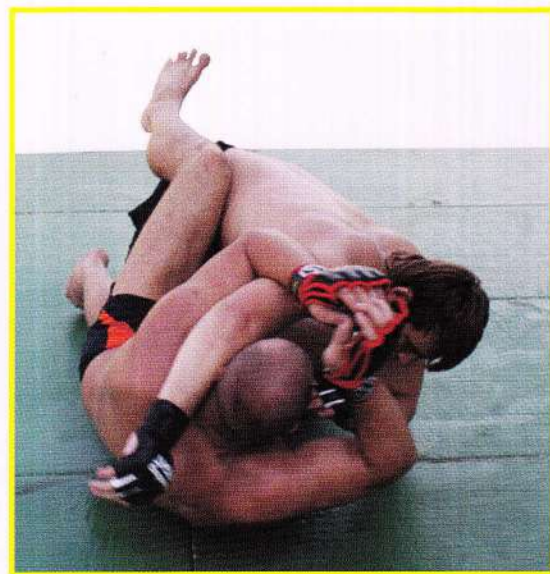
Keeping my left arm wrapped around the back of Kirill's right arm, I push off the mat with my left foot and shrimp my hips toward my left side.







Having scooted my body out from underneath Kirill's body, I post my right elbow on the mat and throw my left leg over his back.



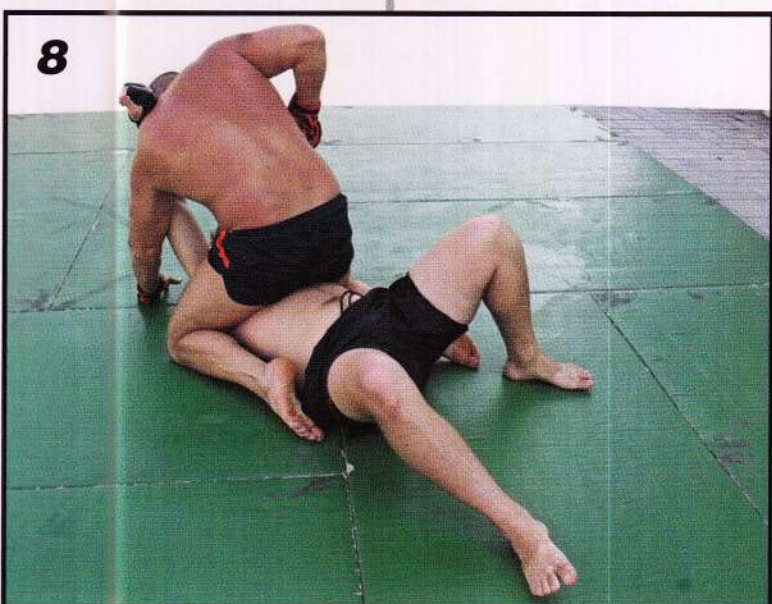
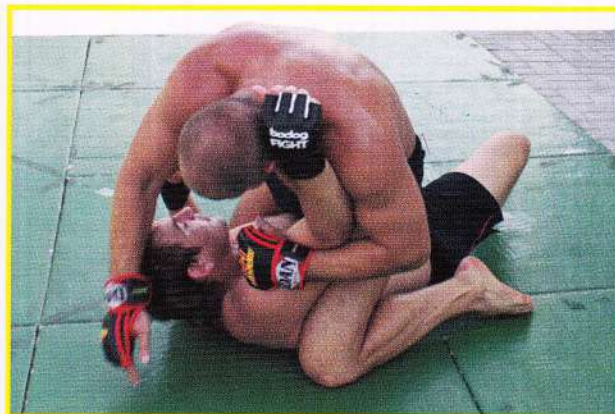
I hook my left leg over Kirill's back, wrap my right leg around the outside of his left knee, and drive my hips into the right side of his body. Notice how I keep his right arm trapped between my head and shoulder using my left arm.

Continuing to drive my hips into the right side of Kirill's body, he trips over my right leg and rolls forward over his left shoulder. As he does this, I drive my left knee toward the mat.

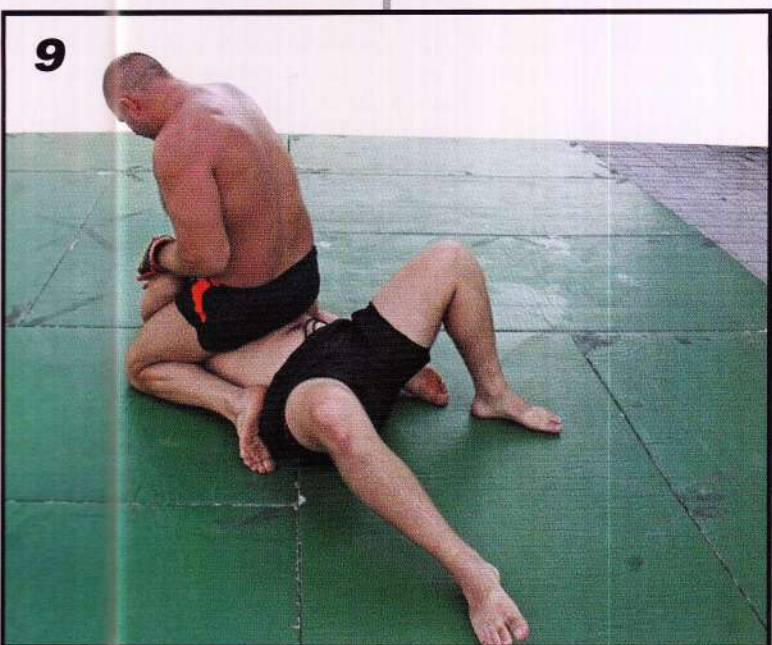
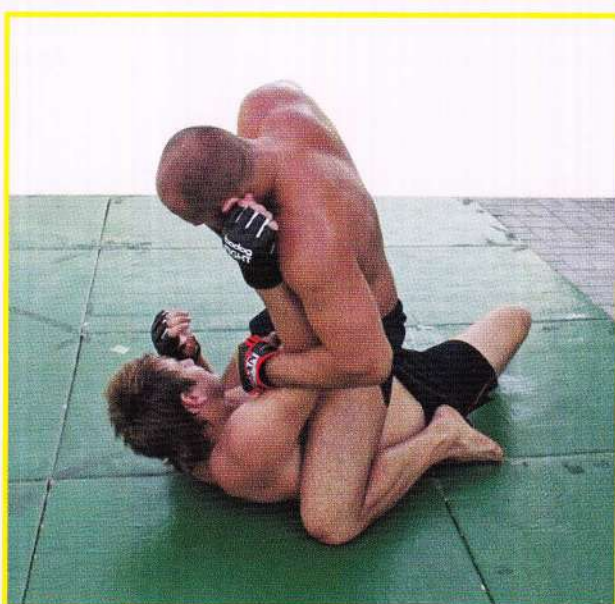




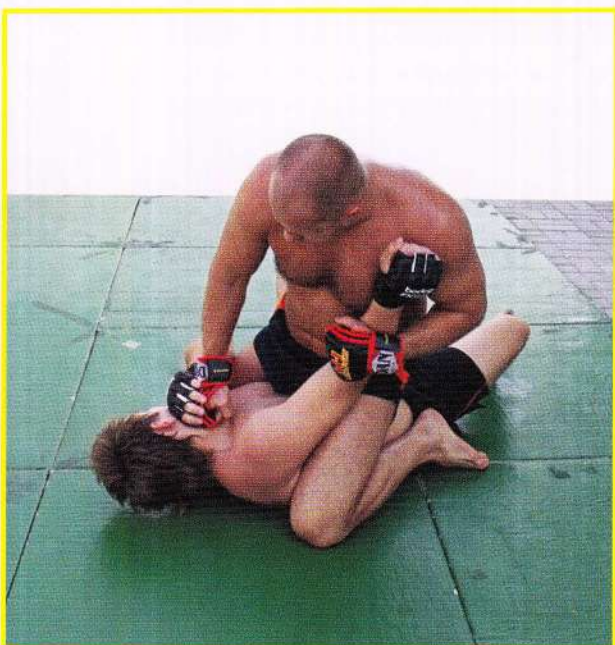
As Kirill rolls to his back, I follow him over and secure the mount position. From here, I am in a great position to secure an armbar on his right arm or execute ground and pound. In this situation, I decide to strike.



I posture up and cock my right arm back.



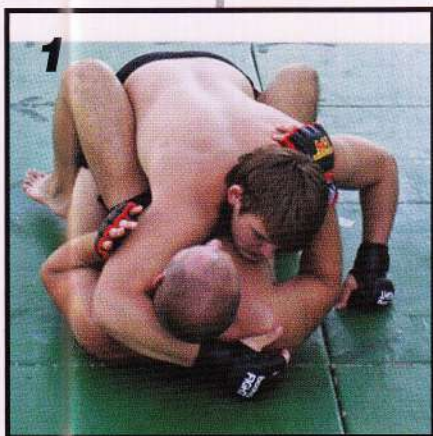
I throw a right punch to Kirill's face.



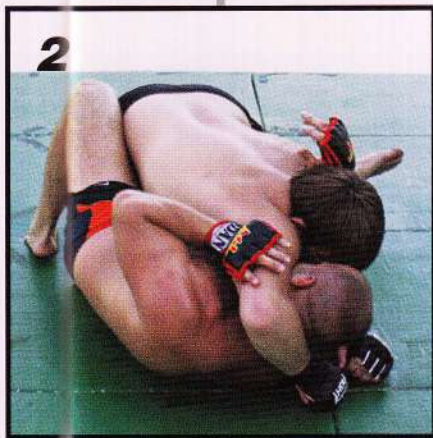
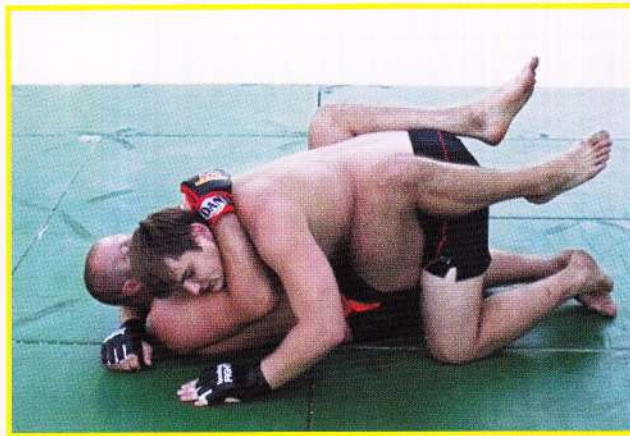


## ARM TRIANGLE TO MOUNT TRANSITION

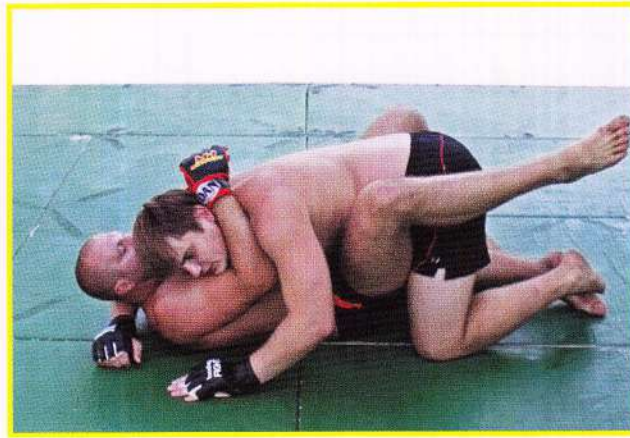
Just like the over-the-back armbar and the hip sweep, this technique comes into play when an opponent in your guard drives his weight forward and reaches one of his arms around the back of your head. If he has his right arm wrapped around the left side of your head, the goal is to slide out from underneath his body and push his right arm to the right side of your head, putting you in the perfect position to apply the arm triangle. However, once you remove his hook on your head, he will most likely realize he is vulnerable and posture up. To prevent this from happening as you make your escape, wrap your far hand around the back of his head and apply downward pressure. It will be hard to keep him broken down in this manner for any duration of time, but once you clear his arm from your head, you only need a split second to lock in the arm triangle. Once you have your figure-four grip locked tight, it's possible to submit your opponent with the arm triangle from your guard, but a much better option is to sweep him in the direction of his trapped arm. Unable to block the sweep by posting his hand on the mat, he'll go directly over to his back and you'll end up in the mount position, which allows you to apply downward pressure and finish the submission with minimal effort.



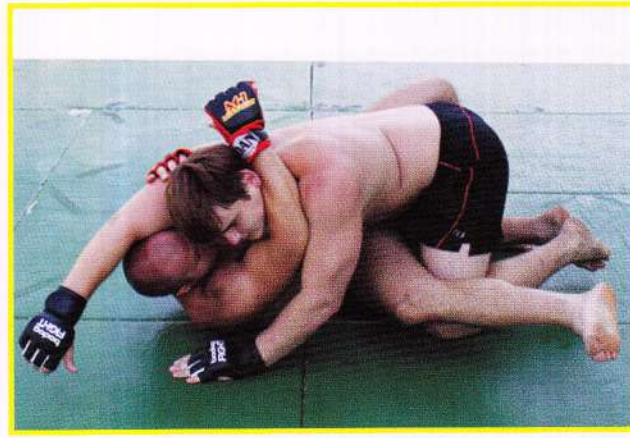
Kirill is in my open guard. He has his right arm wrapped around the back of my head. I'm gripping his right triceps with my left hand and I have my right arm wrapped around the right side of his head.



Driving off the mat with my left foot, I scoop my hips toward my left side and turn toward my right shoulder.

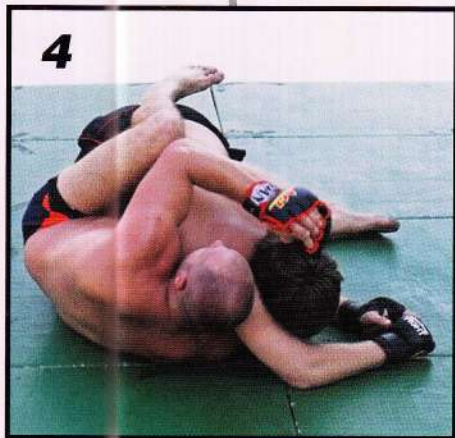


Continuing to scoot my hips toward my left side and turn onto my right shoulder, I push Kirill's right arm upward using my left hand and slip my head out from underneath his right arm. At the same time, I hook my left leg over his back and hook my right leg around the outside of his left knee. It is important to notice that I've kept my right arm wrapped around the left side of Kirill's neck to prevent him from posturing up.





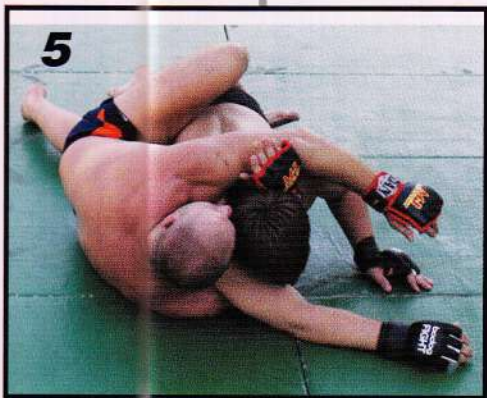
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The instant I slip my head out from underneath Kirill's right arm, I place my right ear against his right shoulder and reach my left hand over his back.



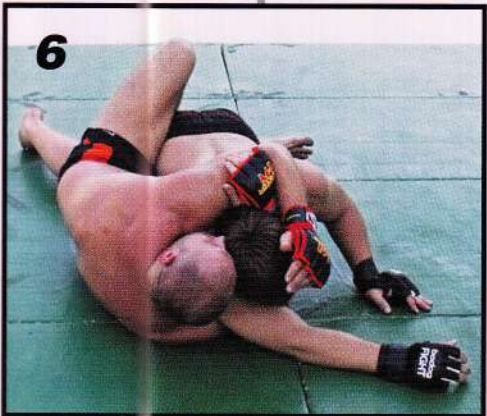
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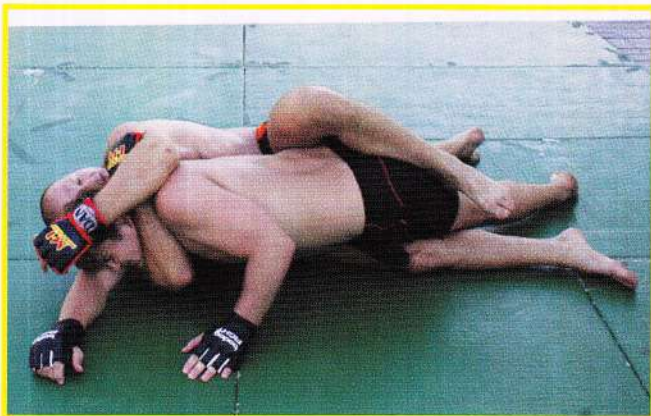
I work toward securing a figure-four lock around Kirill's head by grabbing my left biceps with my right hand.



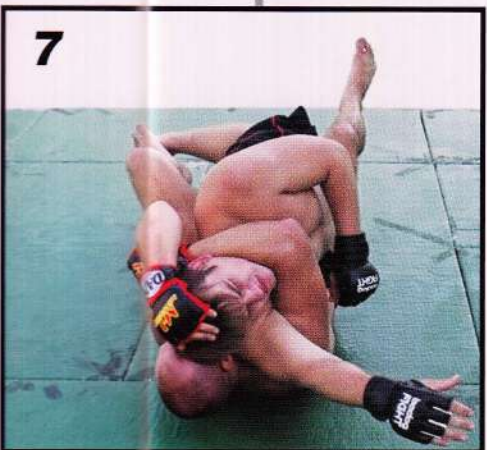
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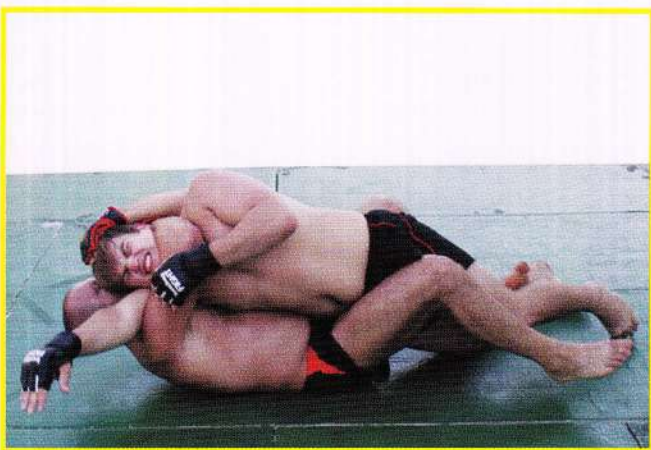
To secure the arm triangle, I curl my left arm inward and place my left hand on the top of Kirill's head.



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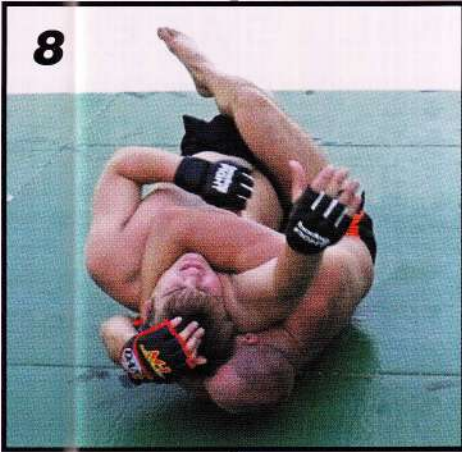


As soon as I secure the arm triangle, I begin sweeping Kirill to his back by rolling toward my left shoulder.

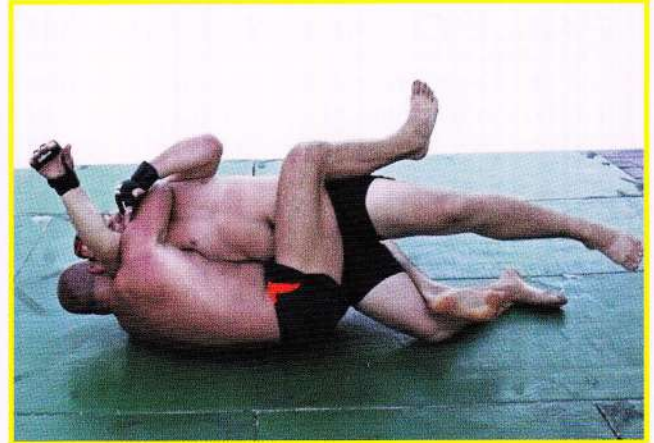




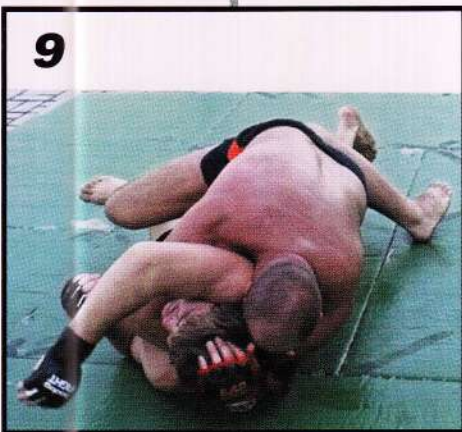
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As I roll over my left shoulder, I hook my right leg around Kirill's left hip and hook my left leg over the back of his right leg. Notice how I have kept my figure-four lock tight. This will allow me to finish my opponent with the arm triangle when I secure the mount position.



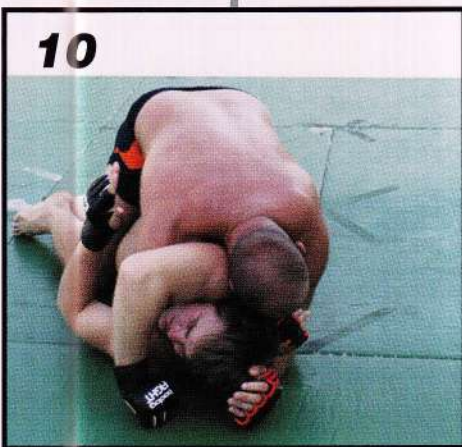
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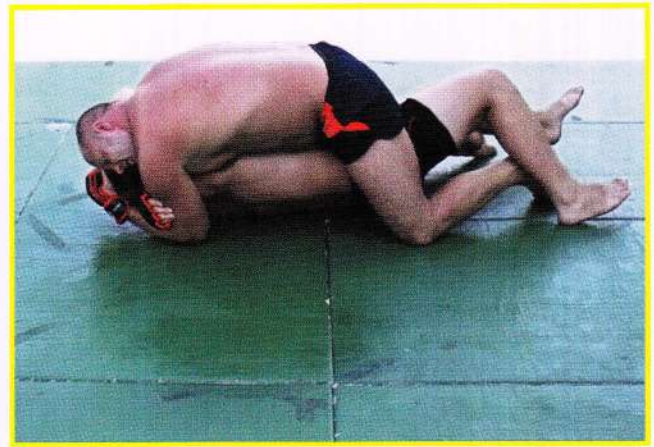
I force Kirill onto his back and assume the mount position. Notice how my left leg is still hooked around the inside of his right leg.



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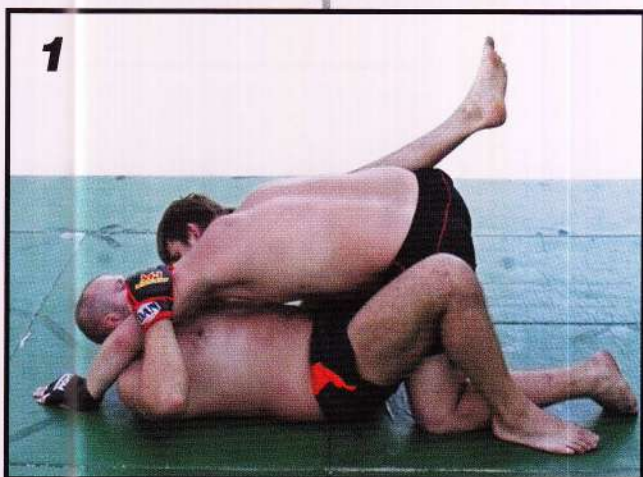
I finish the arm triangle from the mount by driving my weight forward into Kirill's left shoulder and squeezing my arms together.



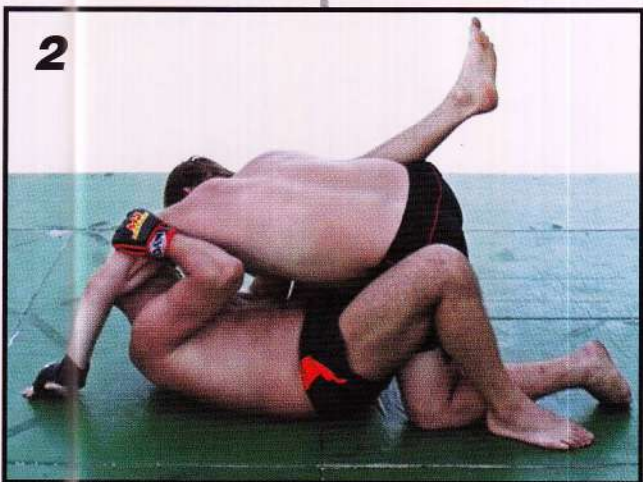


## FAILED ARM TRIANGLE TO WINDMILL SWEEP

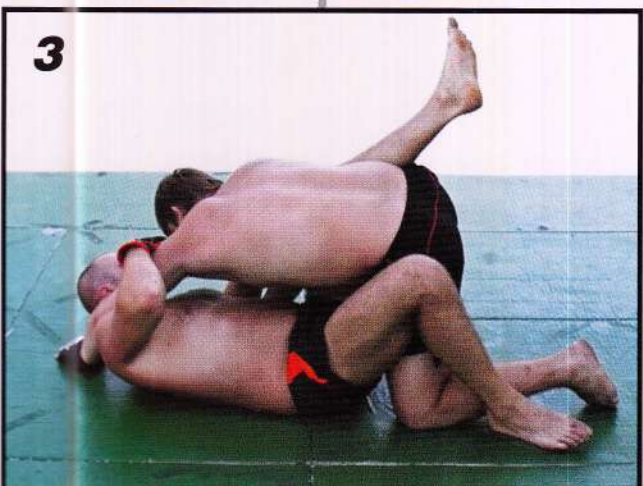
The best way to prevent your opponent from getting his offensive game going is to constantly be on the attack. And the only way to maintain that type of aggression is to realize when one technique has failed and move on to another. In this sequence, my opponent drives his weight forward in my guard and wraps his left arm around the right side of my head. Immediately I attempt to utilize the previous technique and catch him in an arm triangle, but before I can pull my head out from underneath his left arm, he counters by shifting all of his weight to his left side. Instead of attempting to battle his strength, which would be silly since he has gravity on his side, I use his positioning against him by transitioning into the windmill sweep. I accomplish this by hooking my right arm around his left arm, sweeping him to his left side, and claiming the mount position. If I had continued to try and lock in the arm triangle, I not only would have burned precious energy, but I would have also given him a chance to apply a submission of his own.



**Kirill is in my open guard with his left arm wrapped around the right side of my head.**

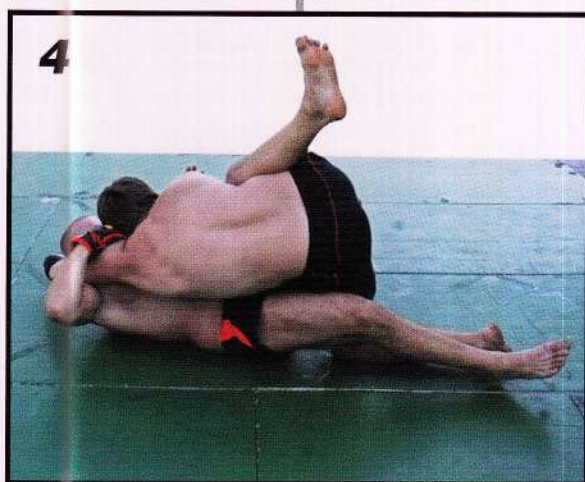


**In an attempt to slip my head out from underneath Kirill's left arm, I grip his triceps with my right hand and push his arm toward my left side.**

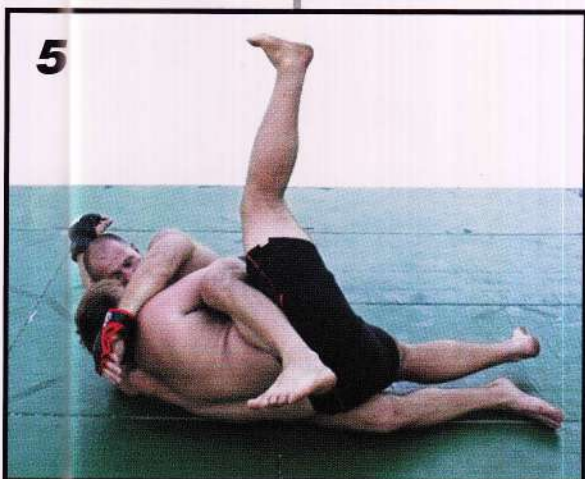


**Realizing that I'm attempting to catch him with an arm triangle, Kirill counters by driving his weight toward my right side. Instead of continuing to try and push his arm to my left side, which would be difficult with all of his weight now centered over his left arm, I cup my right hand over his left arm and prepare to sweep him to my right side.**

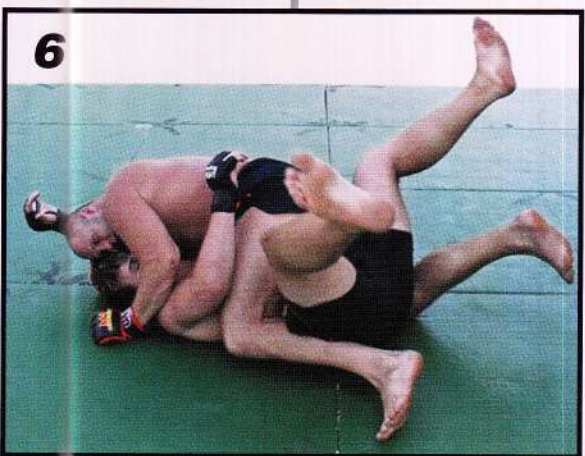
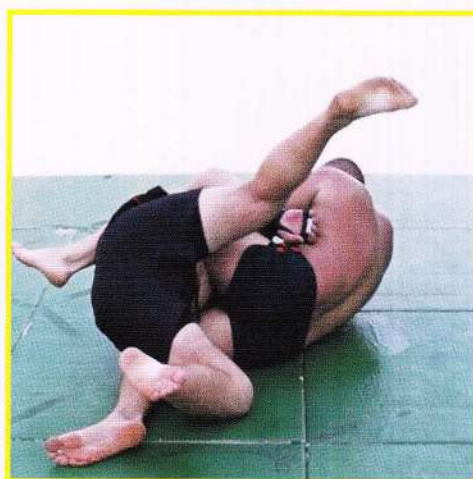




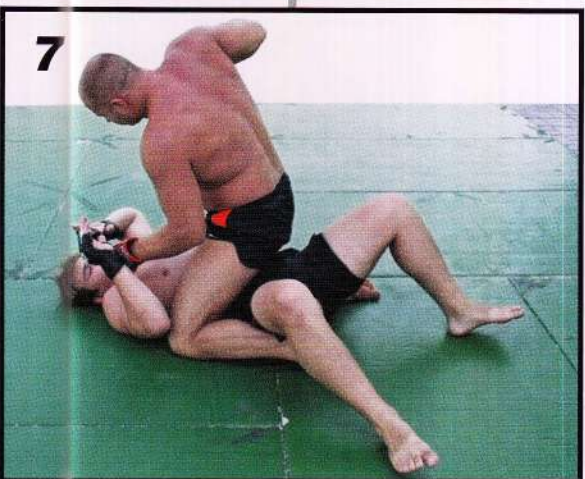
Pulling Kirill's left arm toward my right side using my right hand, I chop my right leg into his left leg, rotate my body in a clockwise direction, and drive my left leg into his right side.



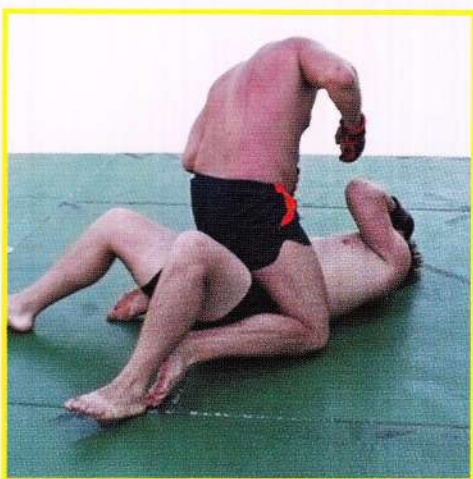
To sweep Kirill to his back, I drive my right leg into his left leg and my left leg into his right side.



I follow Kirill over and secure the mount position.



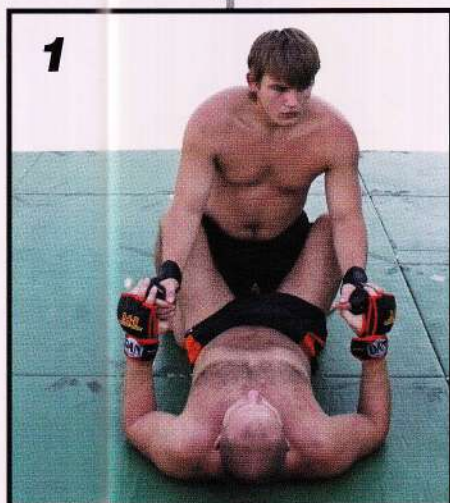
The instant I land in the mount, I posture up and cock my right hand back to throw a downward punch at Kirill's face or midsection.



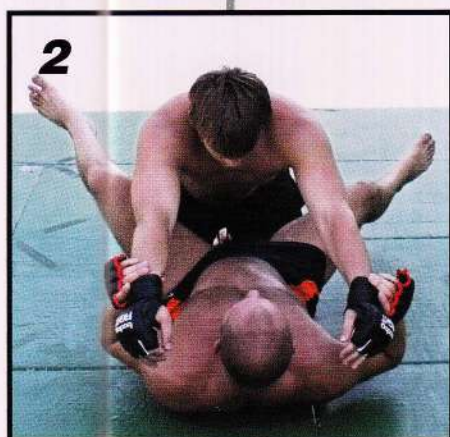


**WINDMILL SWEEP (FROM POSTURED UP GUARD)**

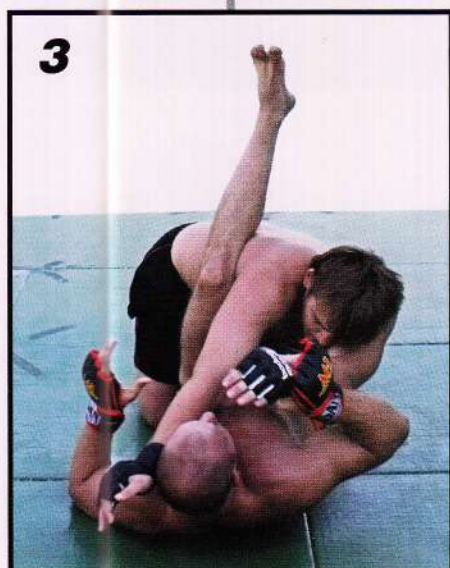
In this sequence I demonstrate how to execute the windmill sweep when your opponent is postured up in your guard. The first step is to obtain double triceps ties or double wrist control. Once you have control of your opponent's arms, yank his body forward to get his momentum moving toward your head. If you want to sweep him to your right side, redirect his momentum in that direction by driving your left leg into his side as he drops down. At the same time, chop your right leg into his left knee to create a barrier for him to fall over. When done correctly, your actions will cause your opponent to roll over his shoulder toward his back, allowing you to follow him over and secure the mount position.



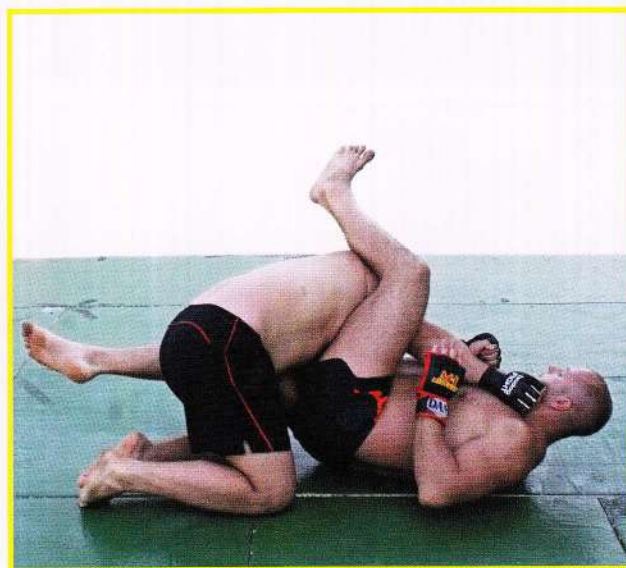
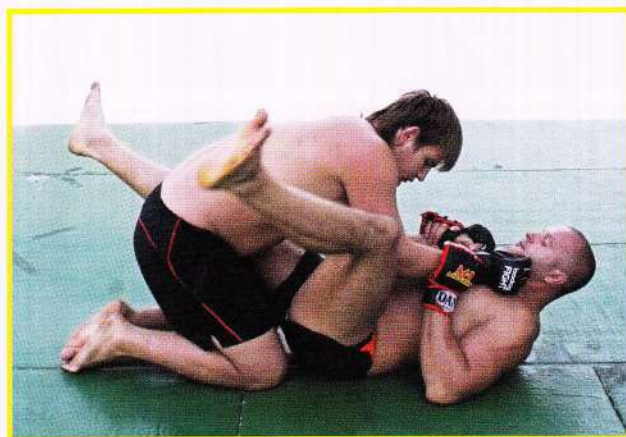
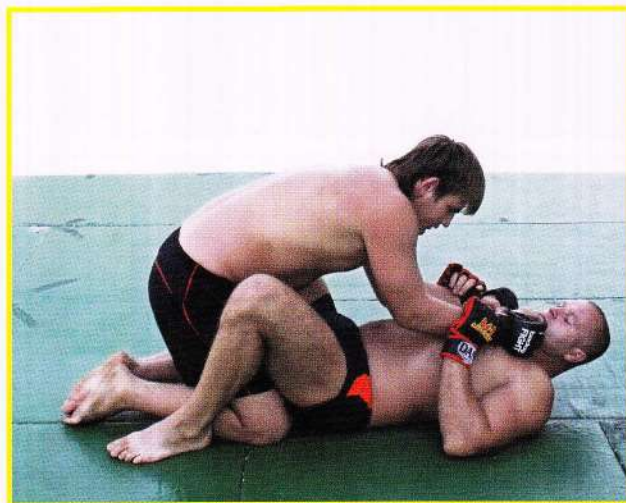
Kirill is postured up in my guard. To set up the windmill sweep, I grab his wrists with my hands.



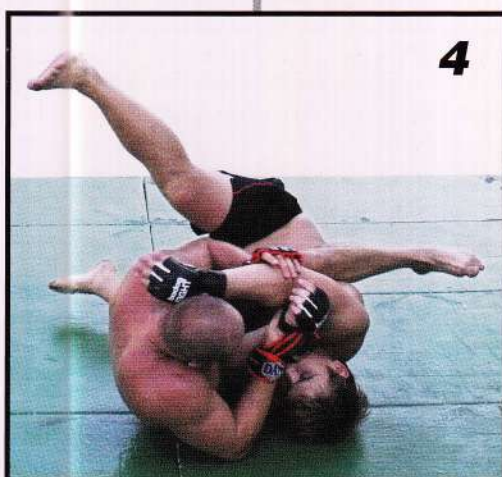
I force Kirill's weight to come forward by pulling his arms toward my head. At the same time, I open my legs and elevate them off the mat.



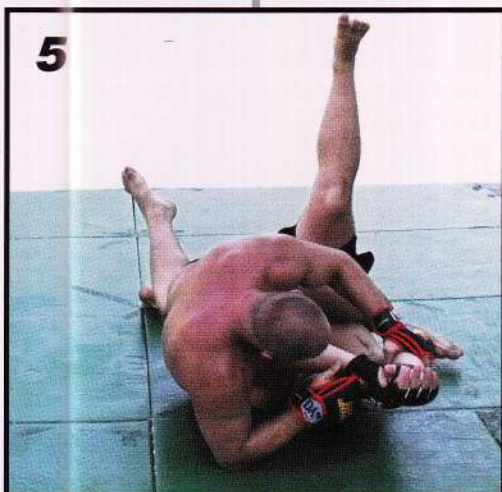
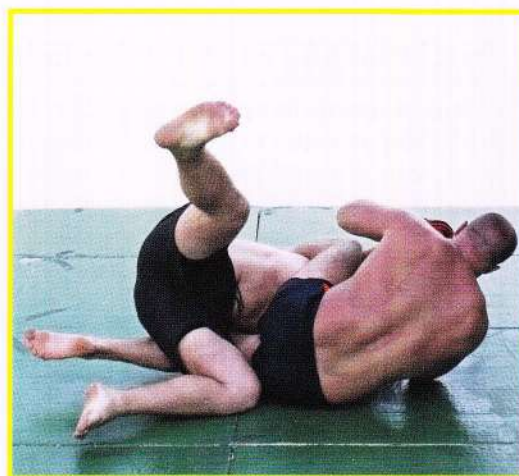
As I pull Kirill's body forward, I rotate my hips in a clockwise direction, chop my right leg into his left leg, and drive my left leg into the right side of his body. Notice how I maintain control of his left arm. If you lose this control, your opponent will be able to counter the sweep by posting his hand on the mat.



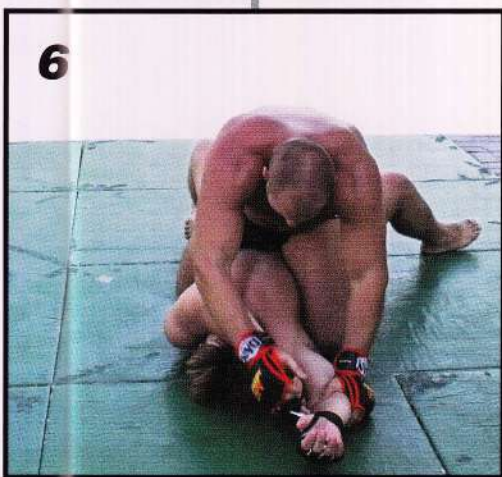
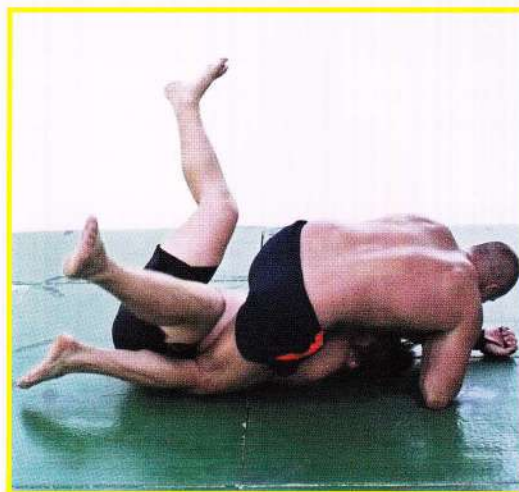




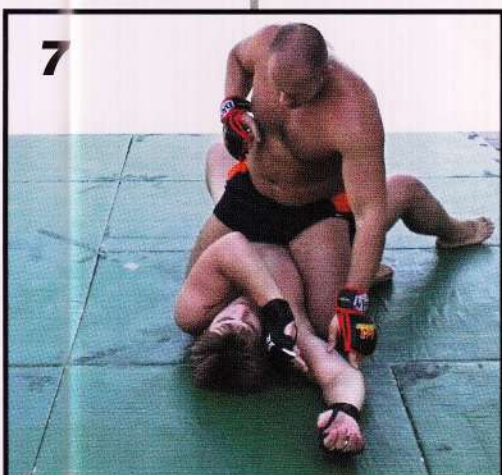
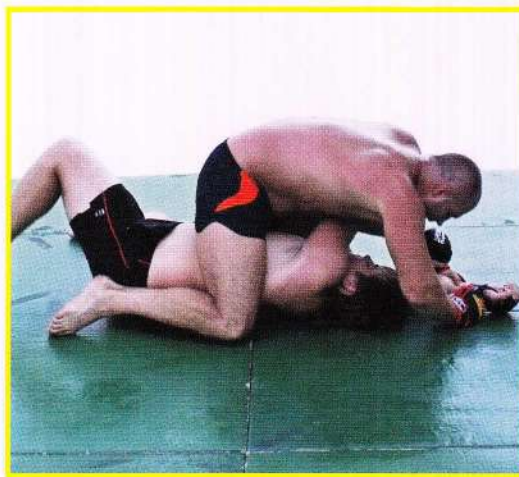
I continue to rotate my hips in a clockwise direction, push my right leg into Kirill's left knee, drive my left leg into the right side of his body, and pull his left arm toward my head using my right hand. The combination of these actions forces Kirill to roll over his left shoulder toward his back.



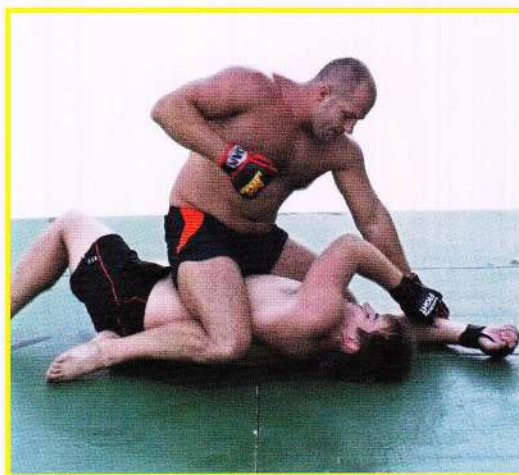
As Kirill rolls to his back, I follow him over and claim the mount.



To secure the mount position, I plant my left knee on the mat on the right side of Kirill's body.



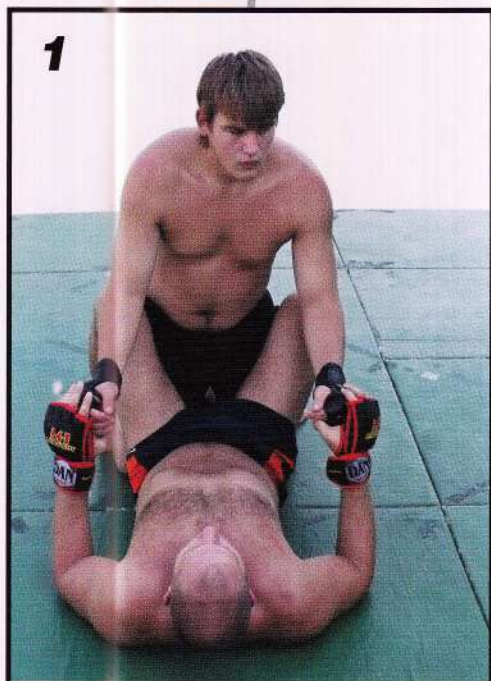
Having secured the mount, I posture up, cock my right hand back, and prepare to throw downward strikes.



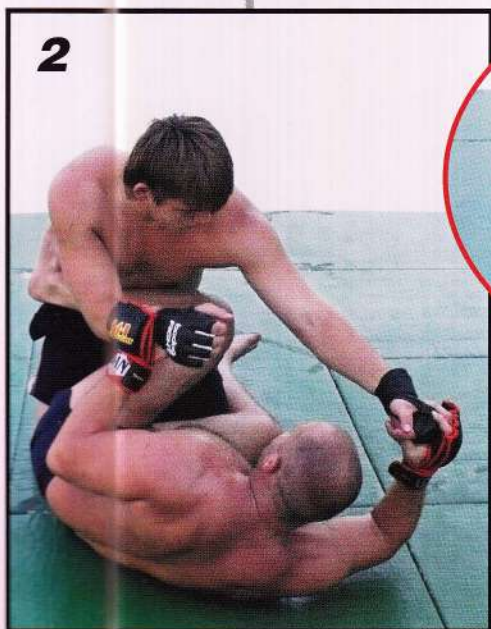
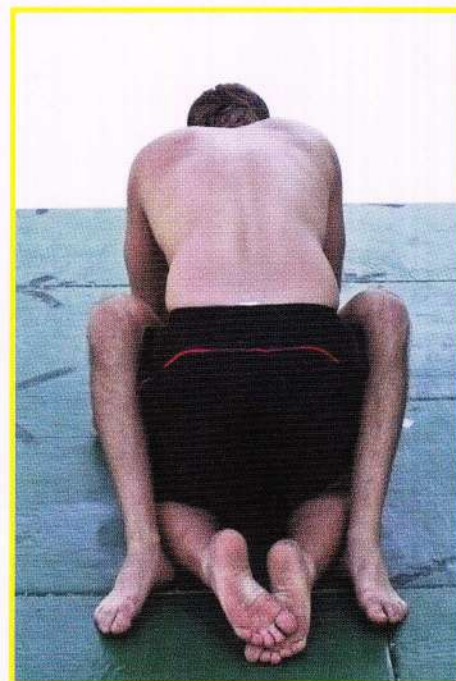


## SCISSOR SWEEP

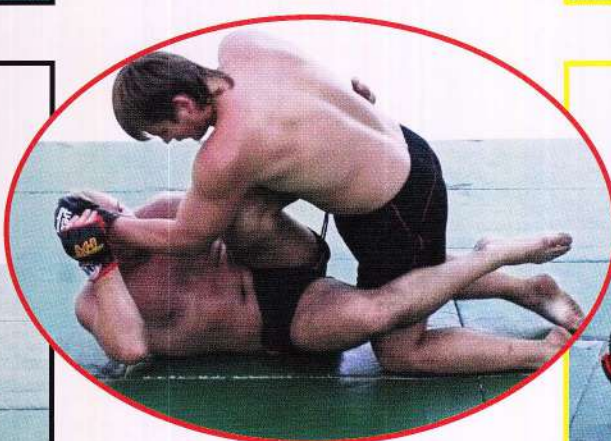
When an opponent postures up in your guard, the scissor sweep is another technique that you can utilize to put him on his back. Just as with the windmill sweep, begin by securing double wrist control and pulling your opponent's body toward your head. If you want to sweep him to your right, slide your left shin in front of his hips as he comes down. At the same time, wrap your right leg around the outside of his left knee. This puts you in what is commonly referred to as the side scissor position (see the second photo in the sequence below.) By driving your opponent's upper body toward your right side using your left leg, and driving his lower body toward your left side using your right leg, you flip him over to his back without using brute force. It's called the scissor sweep because that's exactly what you're doing—scissoring your legs. As your opponent goes over, you want to follow him and then secure either side control or the mount. Deciding which position to secure should be based upon personal preference and how your opponent lands. If the sweep sends him flying, securing side control might be the best option due to the distance between your bodies. If you remain tight to his body as he goes over, securing the mount is usually quite easy.



**1**  
Kirill is postured up in my guard. To set up the scissor sweep, I grab his wrists with my hands.



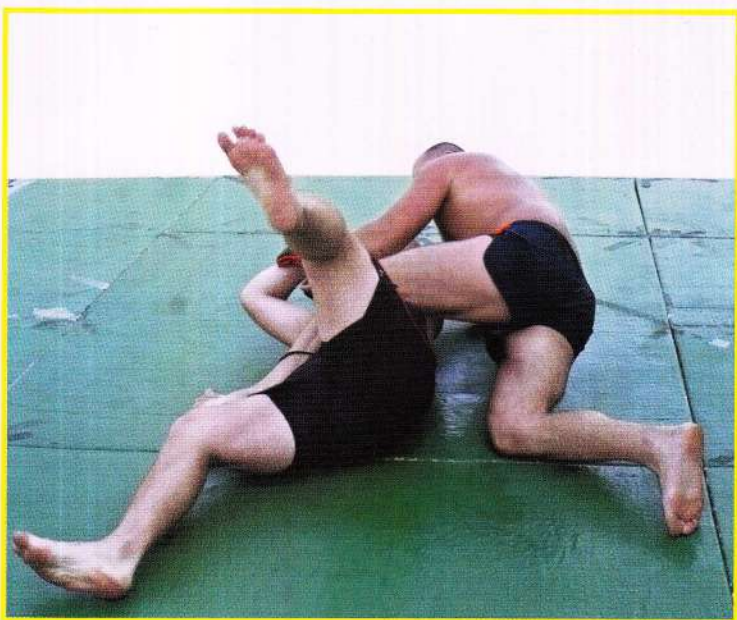
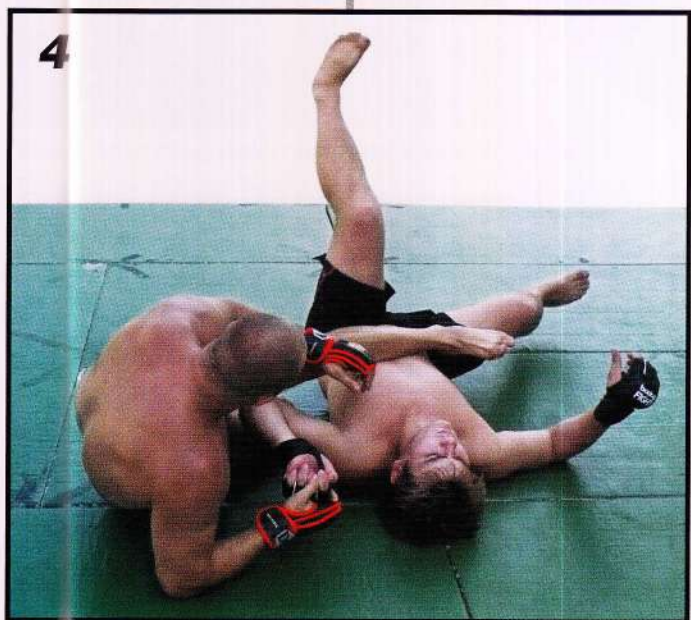
**2**  
Bringing Kirill's weight forward by pulling his arms toward my head, I roll onto my right side, slide my left shin across his abdomen, hook my left foot around his right hip, and wrap my right leg around the outside of his left knee. Notice how the combination of these actions has loaded his weight onto his left leg.







**3** Having disrupted Kirill's balance, I scissor my legs by driving my left leg into the right side of his body and curling my right leg into his left leg. Unable to reestablish his base, he goes tumbling toward his back. It is important to notice that I have maintained control of his left arm using my right hand. If your opponent frees his arm, he will be able to block the sweep by posting his hand on the mat.

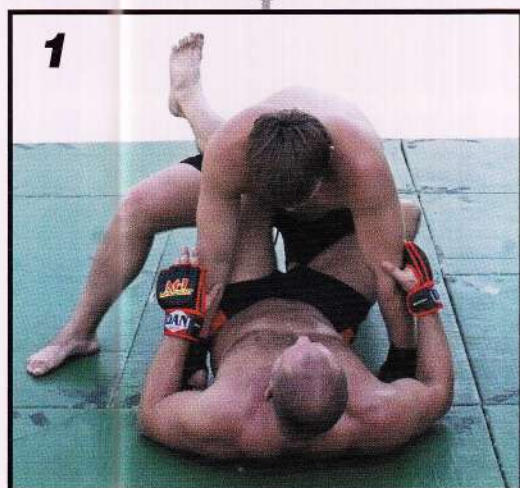


**4** Kirill lands on his back. From here, I can either secure side control or the mount.

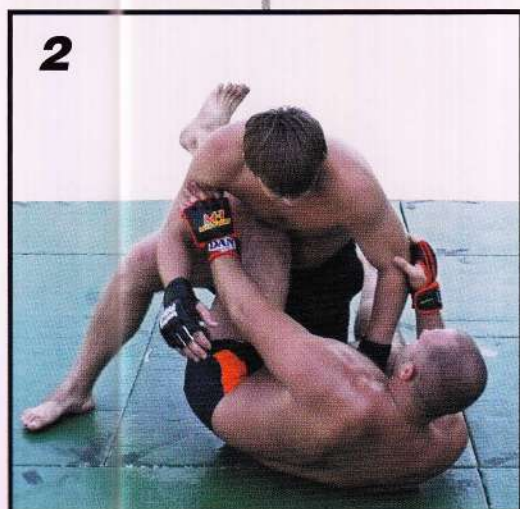


## SIDE SCISSOR TO HALF BUTTERFLY SWEEP

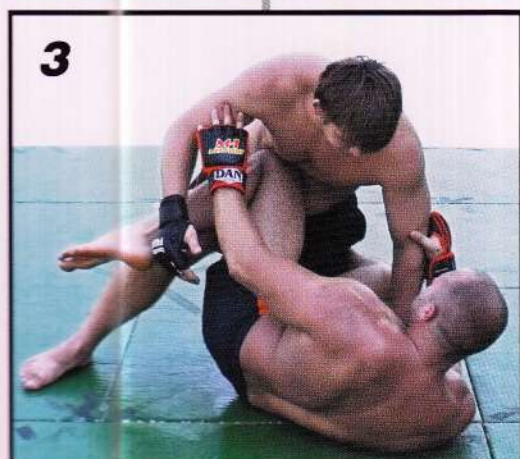
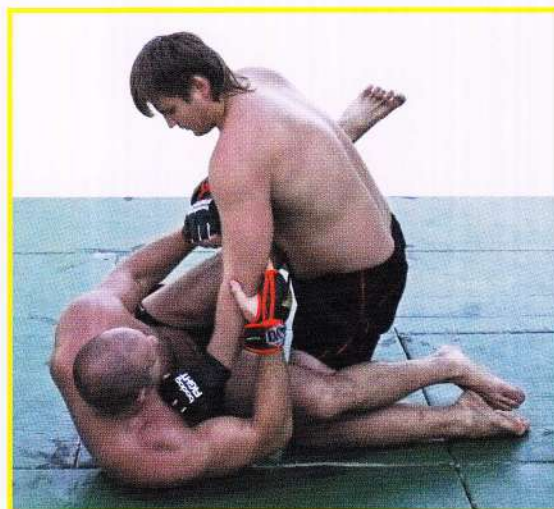
The windmill and scissor sweeps work great when your opponent is postured up in your guard with both of his knees on the mat, but neither works well when your opponent widens his base by posting a foot on the mat. In such a scenario, a much better option is to utilize the scissor to half butterfly sweep demonstrated below. It's similar to the previous technique in that you want to assume the side scissor position, but instead of sliding your shin across your opponent's waistline, you hook it underneath his elevated leg. For example, if your opponent posts his right foot on the mat, you want to hook your left foot underneath his right thigh. To execute the sweep, lift his leg off the mat using your butterfly hook and drive your opposite leg into his grounded knee. When done correctly, he will get swept to his back just as in the previous two techniques. Although at the end of this sequence I transition into the mount, you can also transition into side control. Deciding which transition to make should be based upon your preference and your opponent's reaction to the sweep.



Kirill is in my open guard with his right foot planted on the mat.

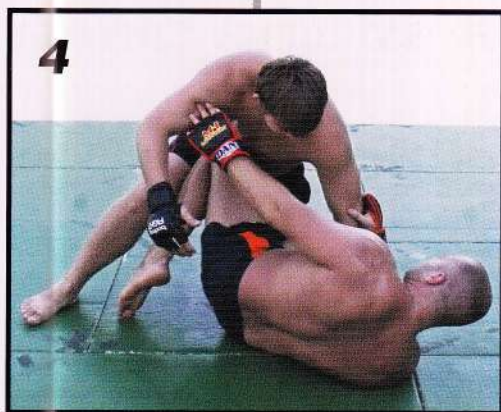


I secure the side scissor position by rolling to my right side, sliding my left knee in front of Kirill's body, wrapping my right leg around his left leg, and gripping his left triceps with my right hand.

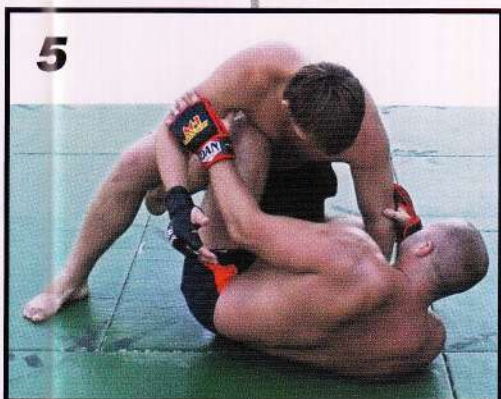
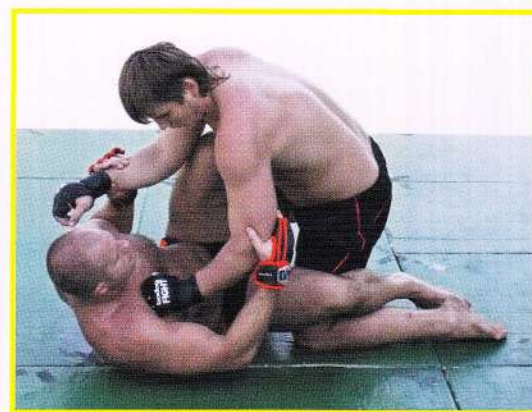


I begin circling my left leg around to the front of Kirill's right leg.

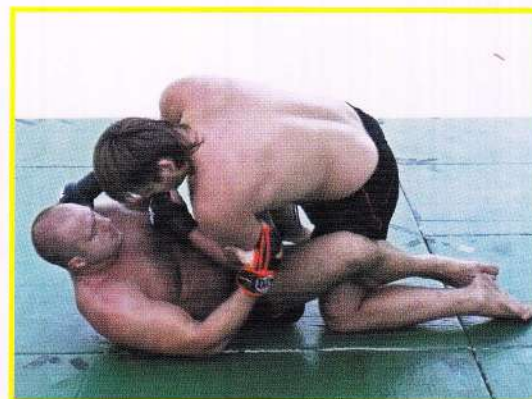




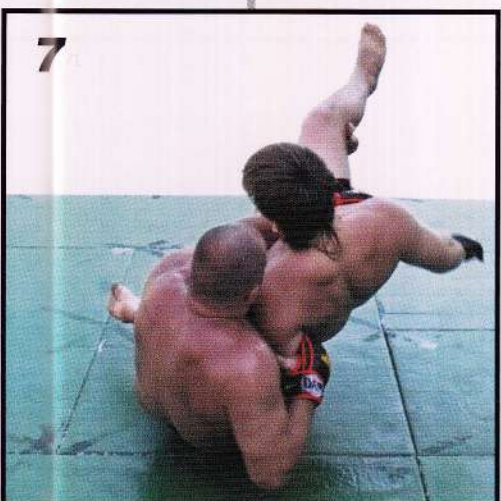
**4** I continue to circle my left leg around to the front of Kirill's right leg. Notice how I've kept my right leg wrapped around his left leg and maintained a tight grip on his left triceps with my right hand.



**5** I hook my left foot underneath Kirill's right hamstring.



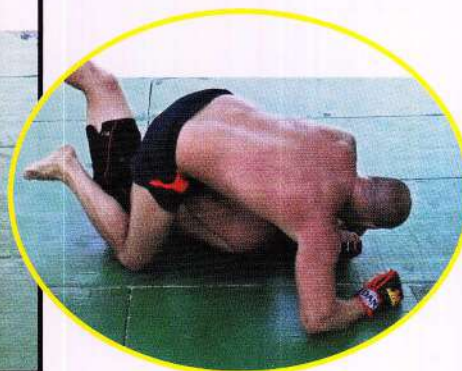
**6** Pulling Kirill's left arm into my body using my right hand, I elevate his right leg off the mat using my left foot. At the same time, I curl my right leg into his left knee.



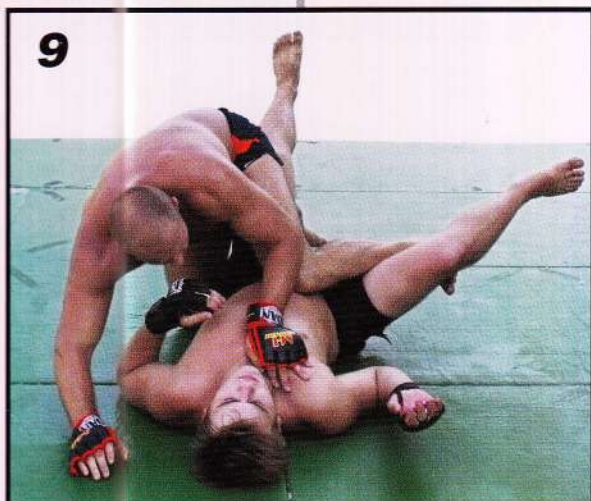
**7** Continuing to curl my right leg into Kirill's left leg, I elevate his right leg further off the mat and sit up to my right side.



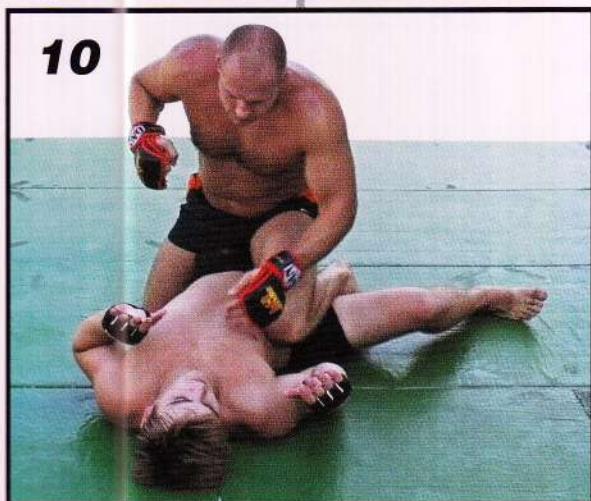




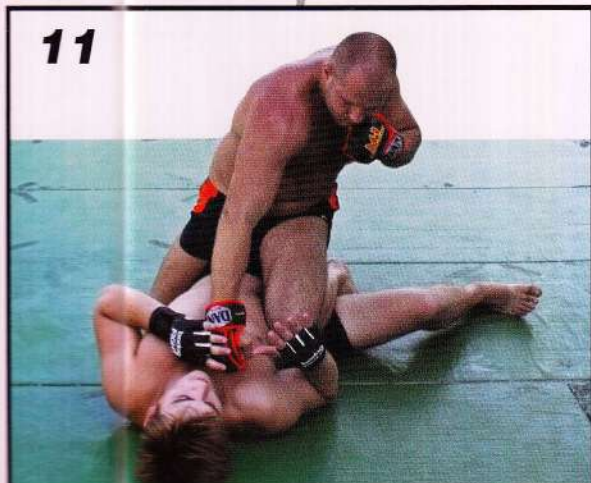
I sweep Kirill to his back.



As Kirill lands on his back, I climb up to my right knee, post my right hand on the mat, post my left hand on his chest, and drive my left knee toward the mat. It is important to notice that I still have my left foot hooked around the inside of his right thigh.



The moment I secure the mount position, I cock my right hand back and prepare to throw downward strikes.

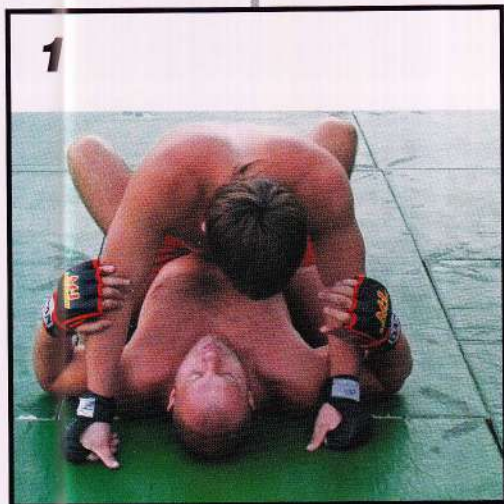


I throw a right punch at Kirill's face.

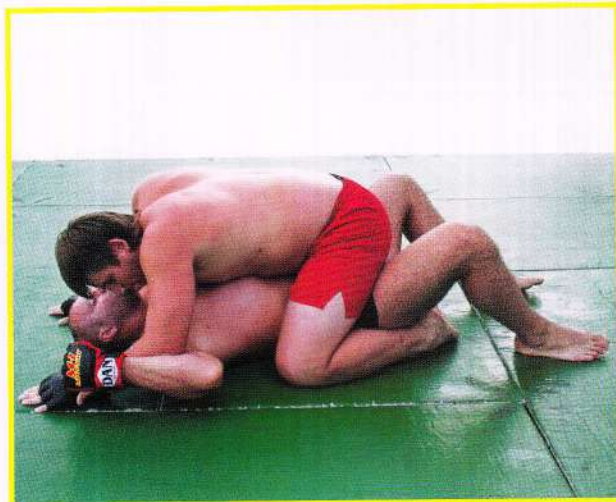


## BASIC BRIDGE ESCAPE

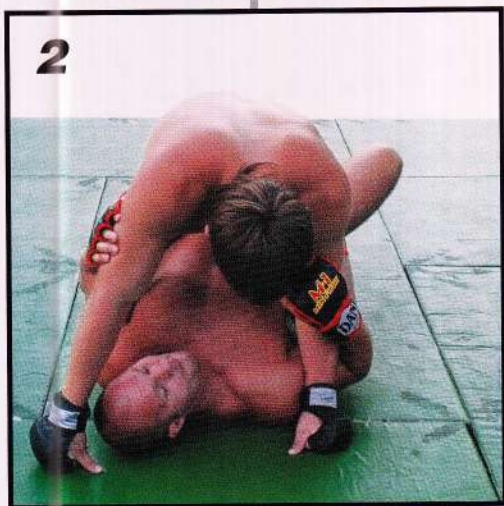
Having your opponent mounted on top of you can be an extremely unpleasant situation, making it very important to learn as many escapes as possible. Perhaps the easiest and most effective mount escape is the basic bridge. If you look at the third step in the sequence below, you'll notice that in the left column I'm gripping my opponent's triceps and in the right column I'm driving my arm into his armpit. The first method should be utilized when your opponent has his hands posted on the mat or your chest, which he'll often do when posturing up to strike. The second method should be utilized when you can't obtain control of your opponent's arm because he is keeping his posture low or has his arm wrapped around the back of your head. Both utilize the same movements—the only difference is the grip you use to drive your opponent over to his back. Like all the variations I offer, I suggest learning both.



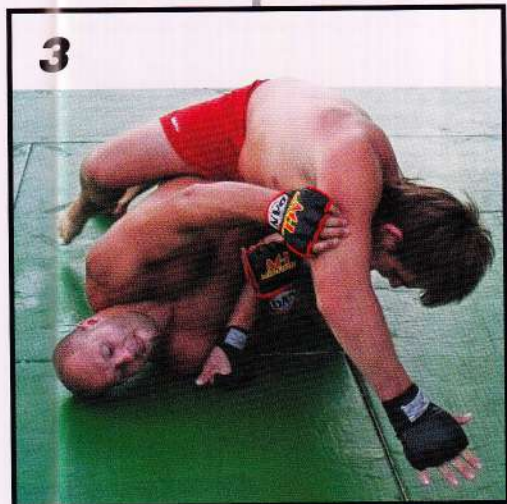
Kirill is mounted on top of me.



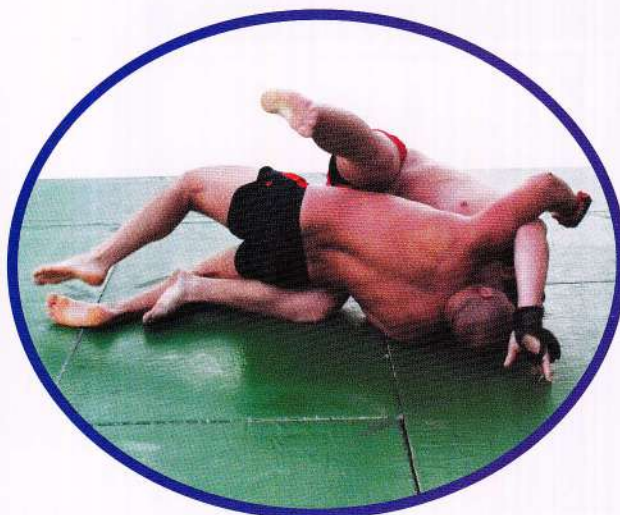
I hook my right arm around Kirill's left arm and grab his right triceps with my left hand.



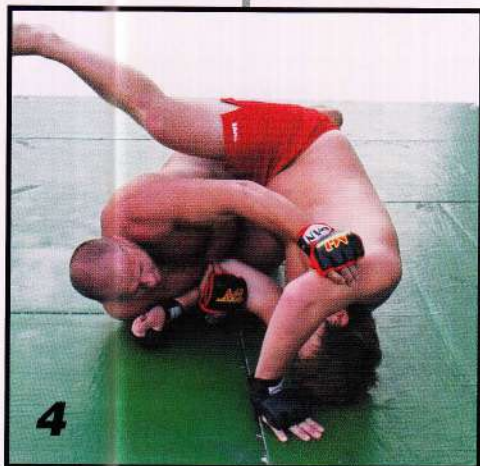
Left Column: Trapping Kirill's left arm to my chest using my right arm, I push his right arm toward my right side and roll over my right shoulder.



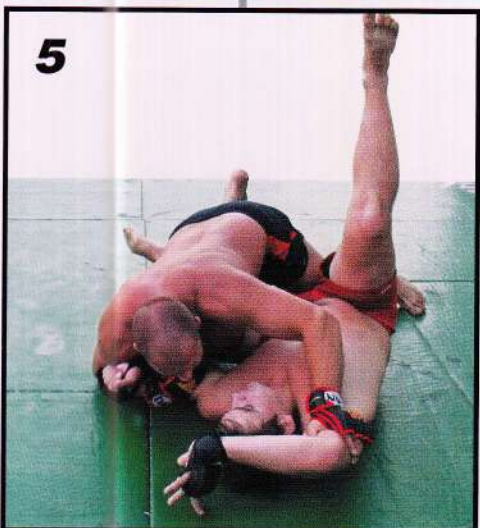
Right Column: Unable to establish a grip on Kirill's right triceps, I drive my left arm into his right armpit as I roll over my right shoulder.







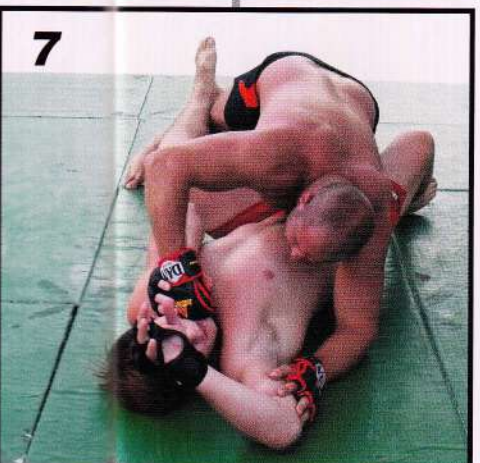
Continuing to force Kirill's right arm toward my right side, I drive off the mat with my left foot and roll over my right shoulder. The combination of these actions forces him to roll over his left shoulder.



As I force Kirill to his back, I climb up to my knees and secure the top position.



The instant I land in Kirill's guard, I cock my right hand back and prepare to throw punches.



I throw a right punch at Kirill's face.

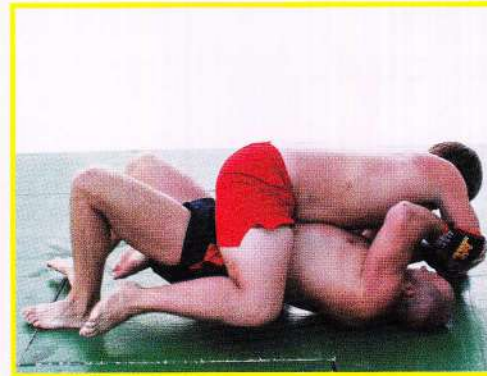
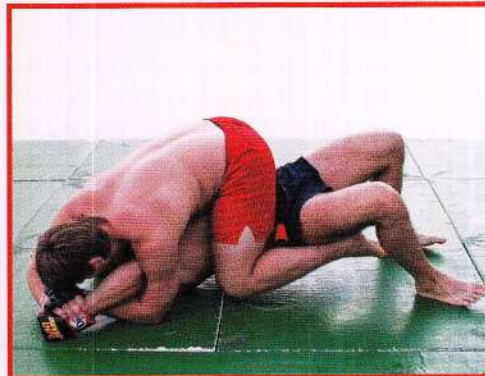


## SHOULDER LOCK COUNTER ESCAPE

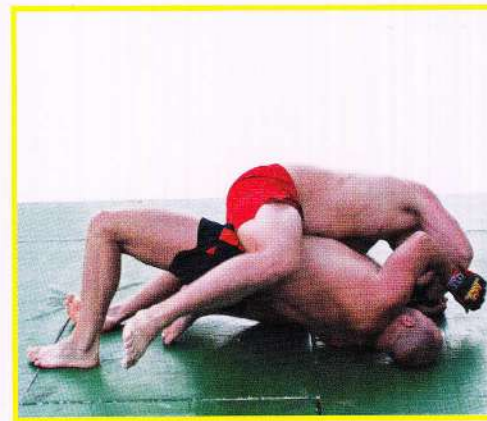
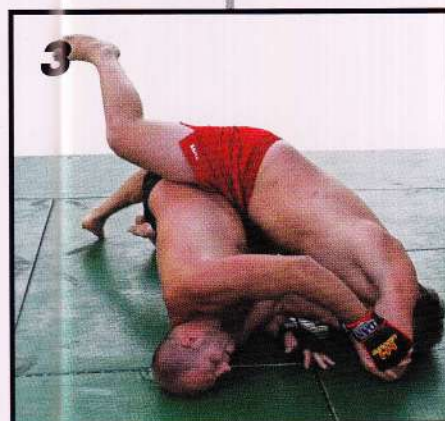
When your opponent establishes the mount position, there are a number of submissions that he can apply, namely straight armbars and shoulder locks. In order to survive, you must learn how to escape all of the submissions available to him. Below, my opponent attempts to secure an Americana shoulder lock on my right arm. The instant he establishes his hold, I grip his right elbow with my left hand and then execute a basic bridge escape over my right shoulder. With his left arm wrapped underneath my right arm, he is unable to post his hand on the mat to block my escape. What's great about this particular technique is that not only does it allow you to avoid the submission, but it also puts you in the top position. However, in order to be successful with it you must act quickly. If you allow your opponent to lock in his hold and apply pressure to your shoulder, your chances of escape drop dramatically.



Kirill manages to secure an Americana shoulder lock from the mount position by gripping my right wrist with his left hand, wrapping his left arm underneath my right arm, and grabbing his right wrist with his left hand.



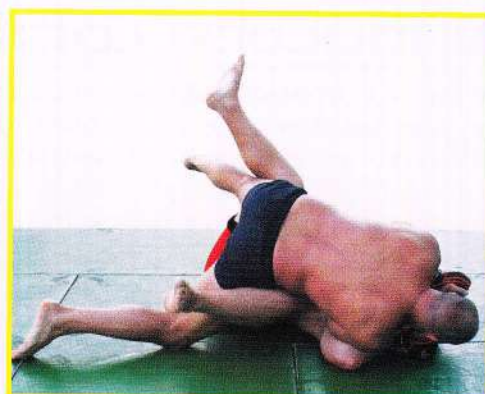
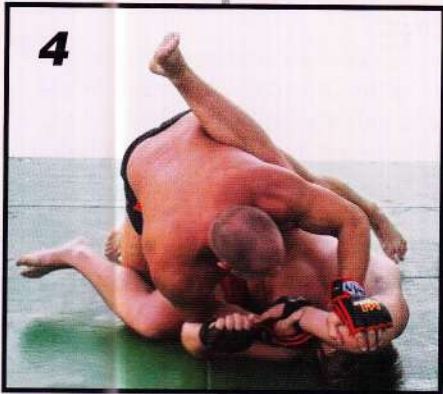
Before Kirill can crank down on his lock and apply pressure to my right shoulder, I grip his right triceps with my left hand and push his arm toward my right side. At the same time, I drive off the mat with both feet, elevate my hips, and roll over my right shoulder.



Continuing with my previous actions, I break Kirill's lock on my arm. With his left arm still tucked underneath my right arm, he is unable to block my sweep by posting his hand on the mat and is forced to roll over his left shoulder.

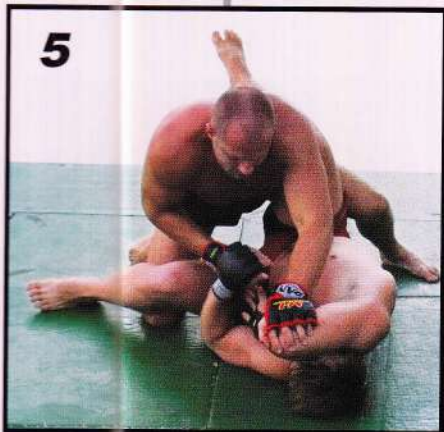


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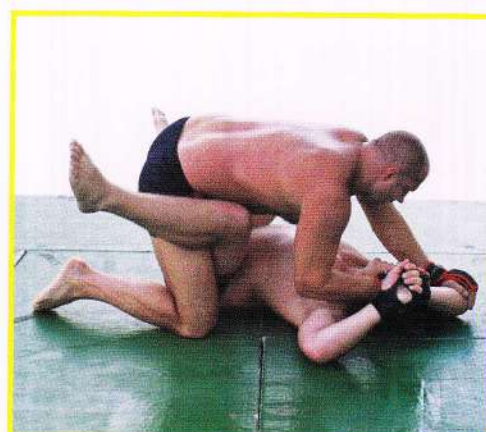


As I roll over my right shoulder, I throw my left leg over my right leg. Notice how I maintain my left grip on Kirill's right arm.

5



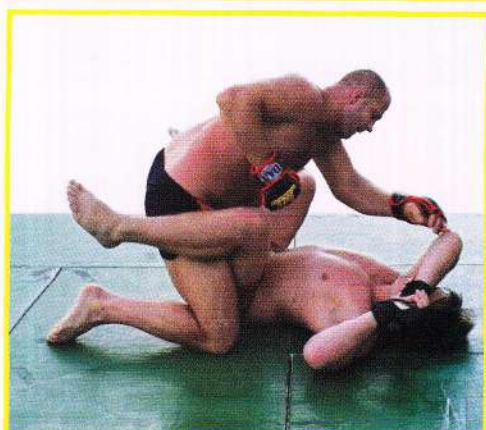
Still pushing on Kirill's right arm using my left hand, I post my left foot on the mat and secure the top position.



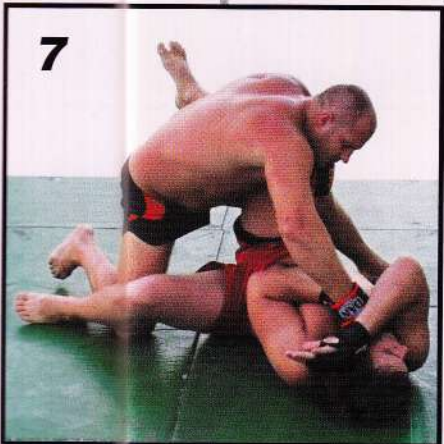
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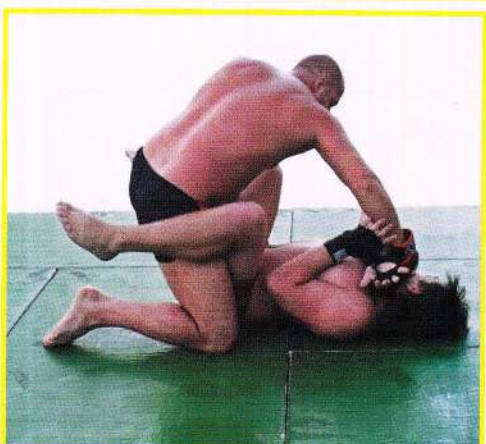
The instant I land in Kirill's guard, I posture up and cock my right hand back.



7



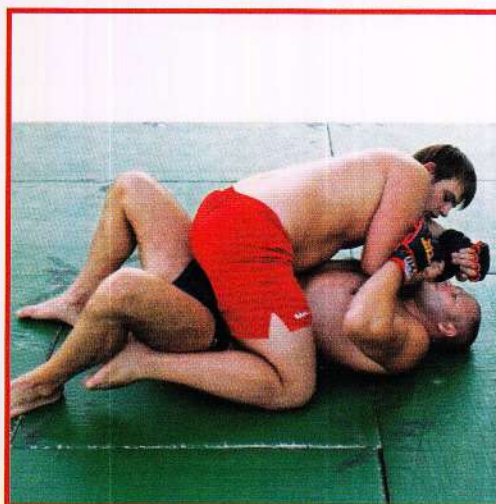
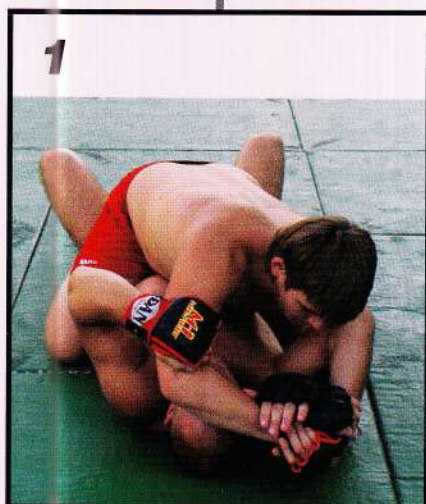
Pulling my left shoulder back and rotating my hips in a counterclockwise direction, I throw an overhand right at Kirill's face.



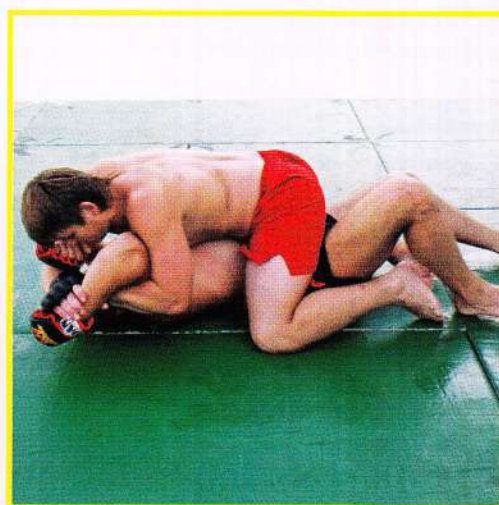
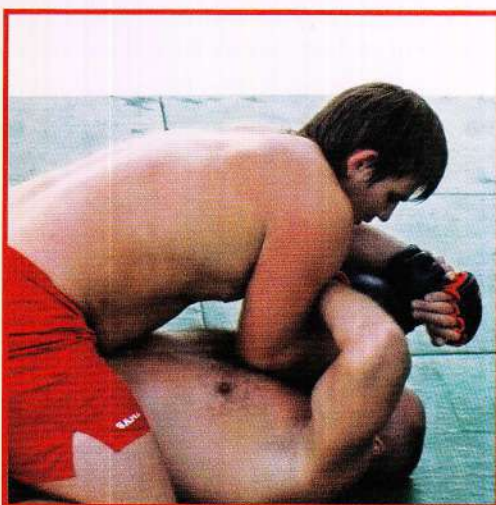
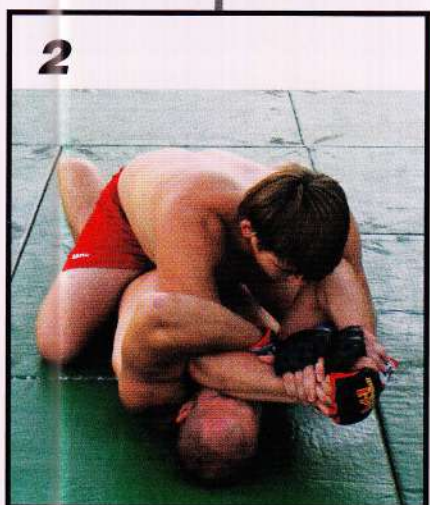


## SHOULDER LOCK COUNTER ESCAPE 2

This is another effective escape for when your opponent attempts to apply a shoulder lock from the mount position. In the sequence below my opponent attacks my right arm just as in the previous sequence, but instead of escaping by gripping his left triceps and bridging over my right shoulder, I apply a shoulder lock on his left arm. Although submitting an opponent with the shoulder lock off your back is difficult, especially when he has the exact same hold on your opposite arm, I use my lock to crank his right arm toward my left side. When combined with a powerful bridge over my left shoulder, I'll put my opponent on his back and end up in his guard. Once you reverse your positioning, it is important to immediately release your lock on your opponent's arm. Submitting your opponent with a shoulder lock from his guard is not only very difficult to accomplish, but it also makes you vulnerable to getting caught in an armbar. In the next sequence I demonstrate how this armbar can be applied to dissuade you from trying to finish the submission. It will also be useful should your opponent attempt to submit you with a shoulder lock from your guard.



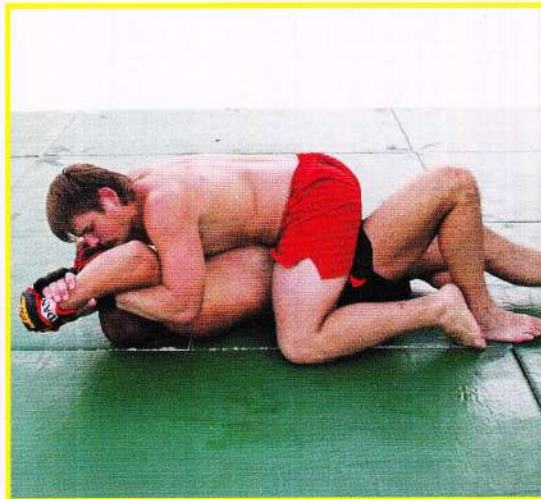
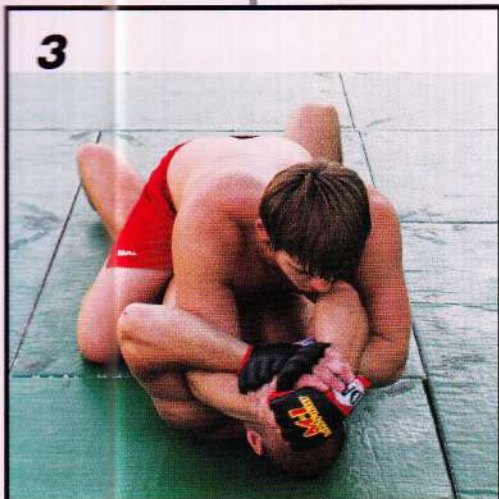
Kirill manages to secure an Americana shoulder lock from the mount position by gripping my right wrist with his right hand, wrapping his left arm underneath my right arm, and grabbing his right wrist with his left hand. Notice how I am gripping his right biceps with my left hand. This prevents him from moving his right arm to the right side of my head and applying the submission.



Before Kirill can move his right arm to the right side of my head and apply the shoulder crank on my right arm, I wrap my left arm over his right arm.

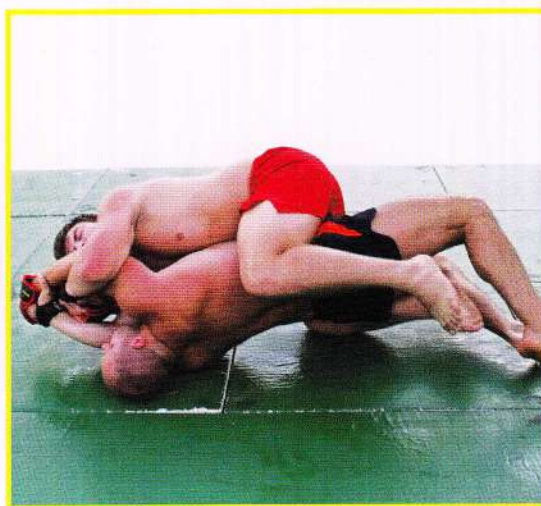


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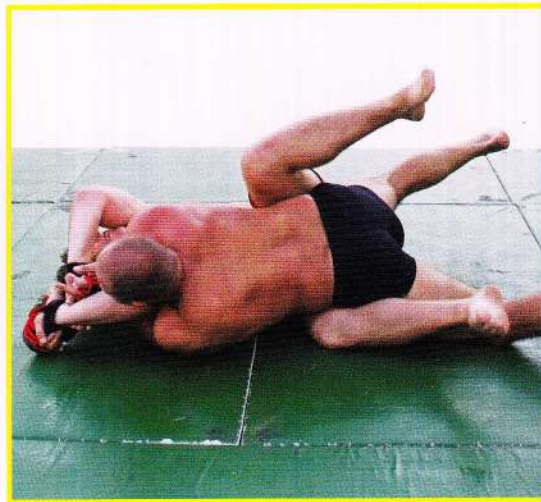
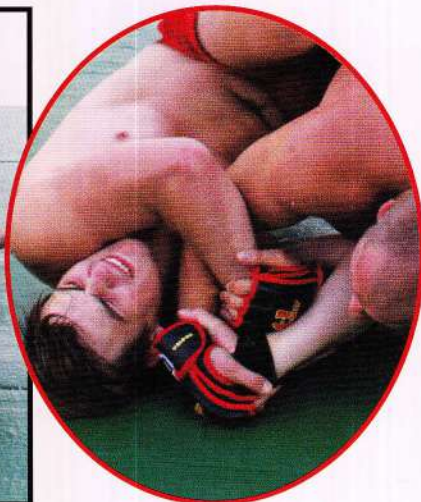
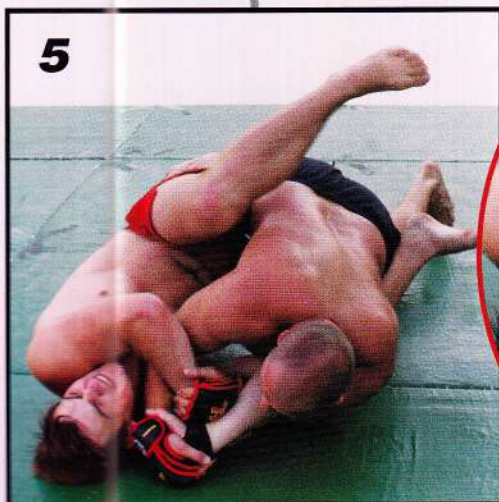
I curl my right hand toward my left side.

4



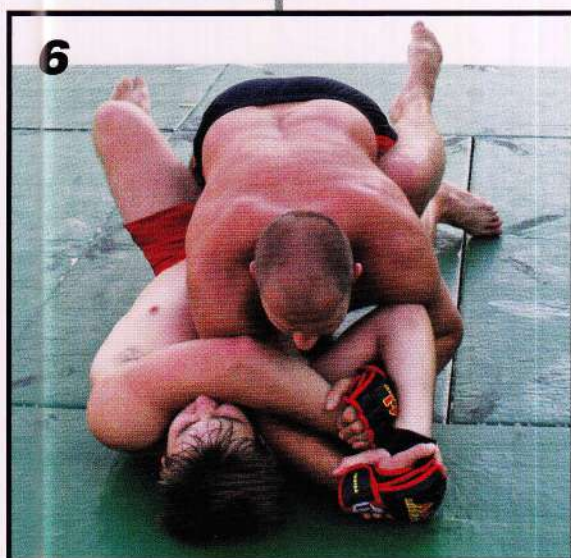
As I curl my right hand toward my left side, Kirill's left arm follows. This allows me to reach my left hand underneath his left arm and grip his forearm. Having established my hold, I drive off the mat with my right foot, elevate my hips, and roll over my left shoulder. With my left arm hooked tightly around Kirill's right arm, he is unable to post his hand on the mat and block my sweep.

5

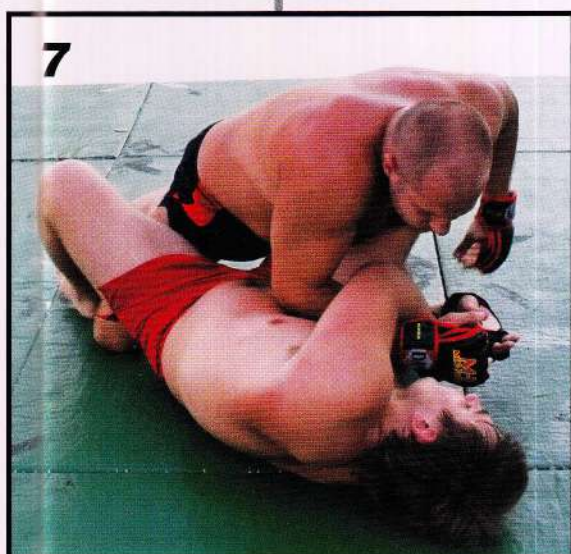


As I roll over my left shoulder, I throw my right leg over my left.

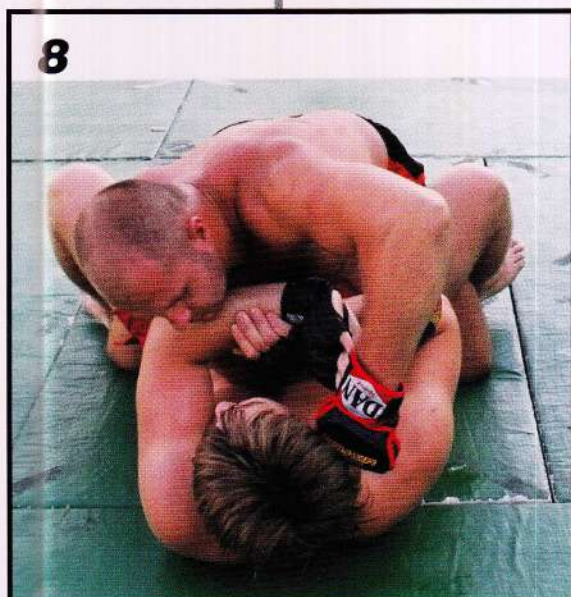




I land in Kirill's guard.



The instant I land in Kirill's guard, I release my grip on his left arm, pull my left arm into my body, and cock my left hand back to throw a strike. Notice how I hook my right hand around the inside of his left arm, and then use that hook to pull his arm toward our legs. This will prevent him from using his left arm to protect his head against my strike.

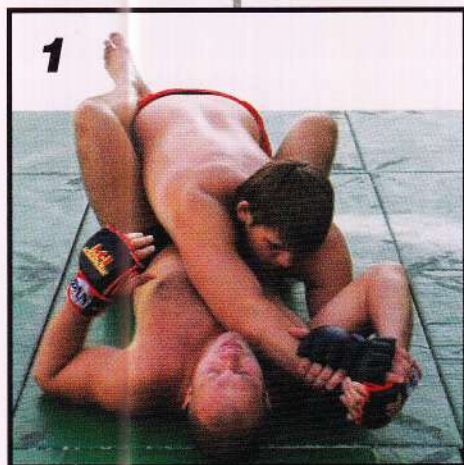


I throw a left hook to Kirill's head.

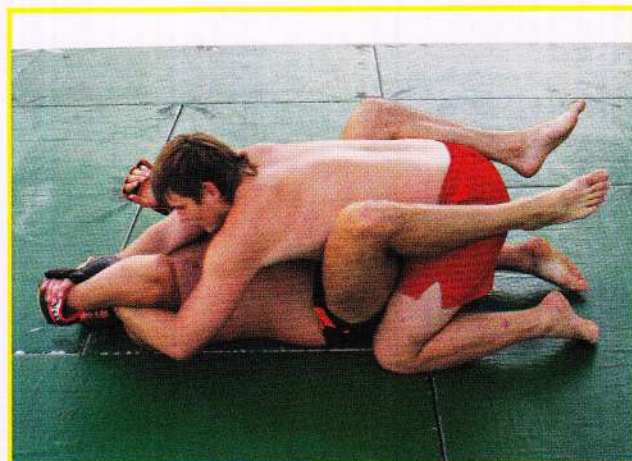


## SHOULDER LOCK COUNTER TO ARMBAR

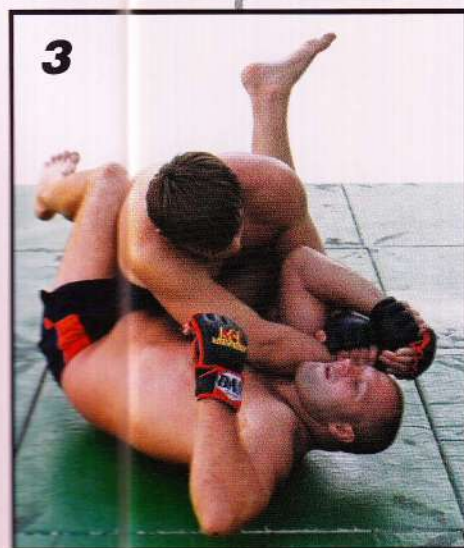
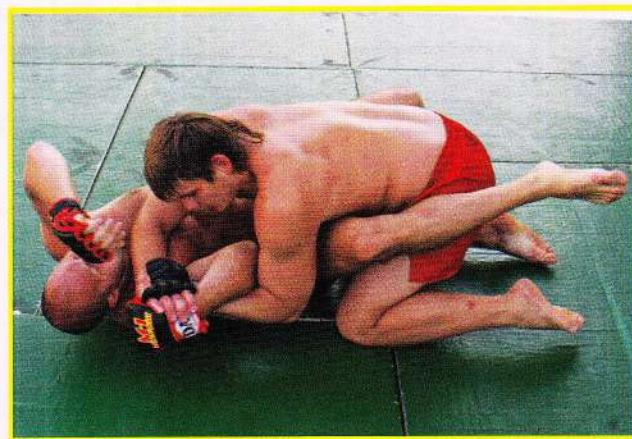
In the previous sequence I demonstrated how to escape a shoulder lock on a mounted opponent by establishing your own shoulder lock and bridging over your shoulder. The instant you land in your opponent's guard, it is important to immediately release your hold to prevent from getting caught in the armbar demonstrated below. I included this technique not only to dissuade you from trying to finish the shoulder lock from your opponent's guard, but to also show you how to apply the armbar should he attempt to finish the shoulder lock from your guard. If you look at the photos, you'll notice that by applying a shoulder lock on my left arm, my opponent has stretched his right arm across my torso. To apply the armbar, all I have to do is move my hips underneath his right arm, throw my left leg over his head, and then sweep him to his back and apply pressure to his elbow.



**1** Kirill manages to secure a shoulder lock on my right arm from my open guard.

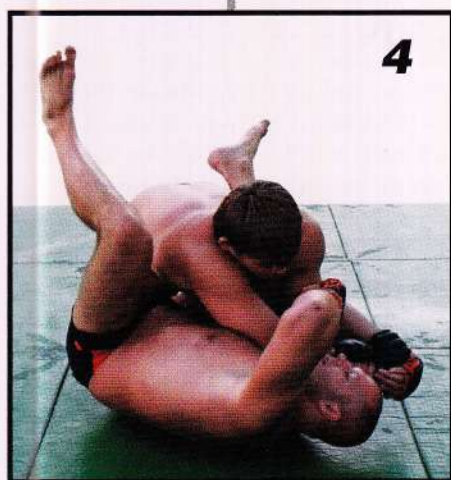


**2** In an attempt to submit me with the shoulder lock, Kirill pulls my right arm toward my body and starts applying the crank.



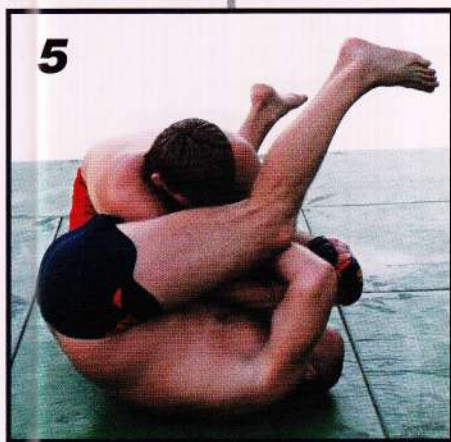
**3** As Kirill applies the shoulder crank on my right arm, I scoot my hips out from underneath his body and move them toward my left side.





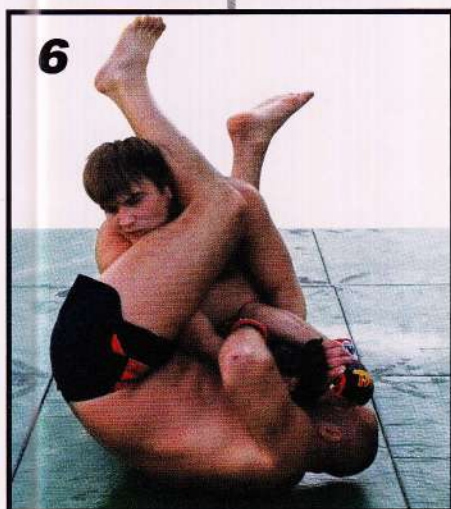
**4**

I hook my left arm over Kirill's right arm and begin moving my left leg toward the left side of his head.



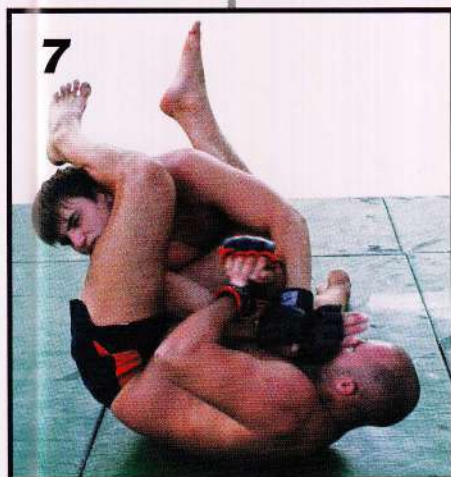
**5**

Elevating my hips off the mat, I move my left leg to the left side of Kirill's head.



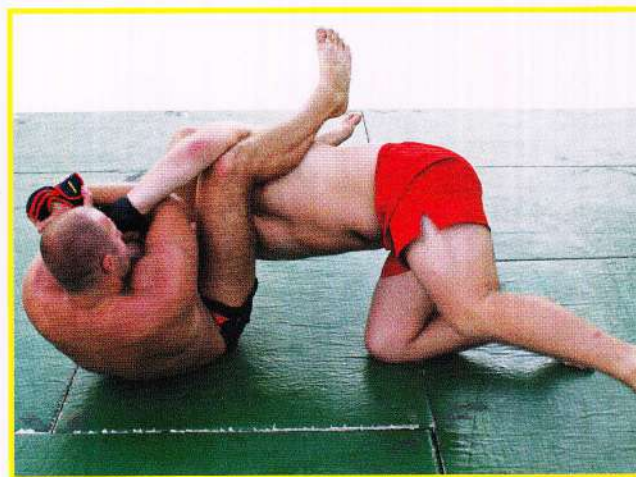
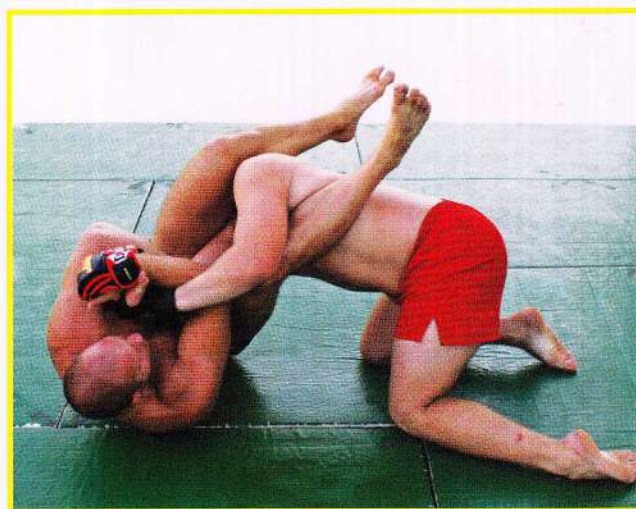
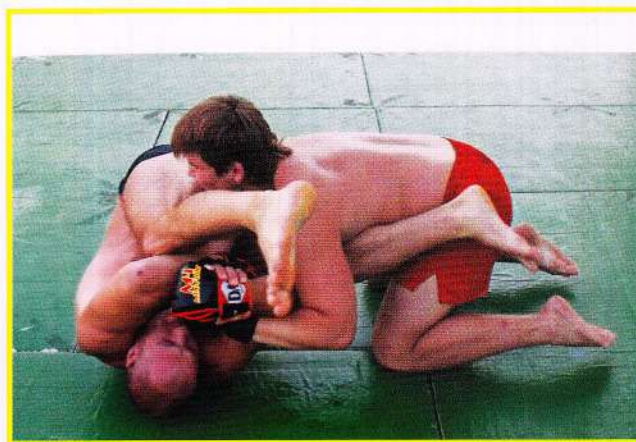
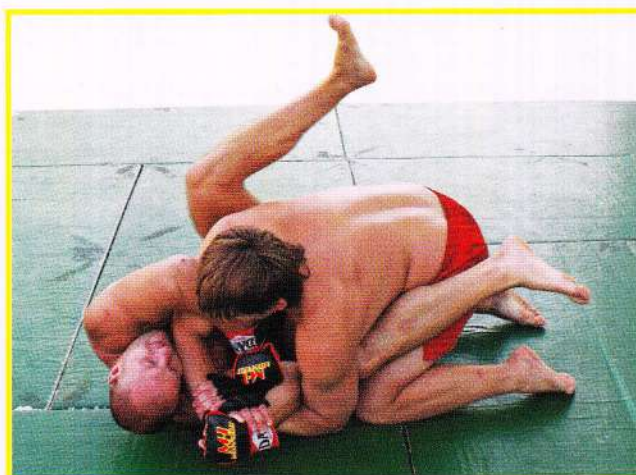
**6**

I wrap my left leg around the left side of Kirill's head.



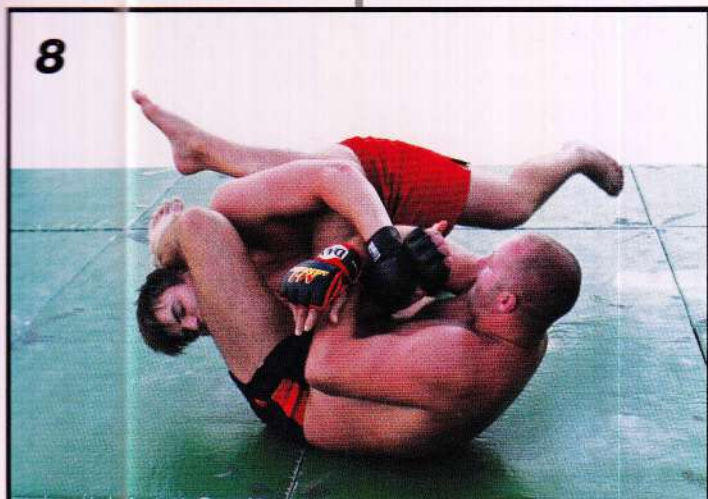
**7**

I drive my left leg into the left side of Kirill's head and my right leg into the left side of his body, forcing him toward his back. At the same time, I grab his right arm with my left hand and begin hooking my right arm over his left forearm.



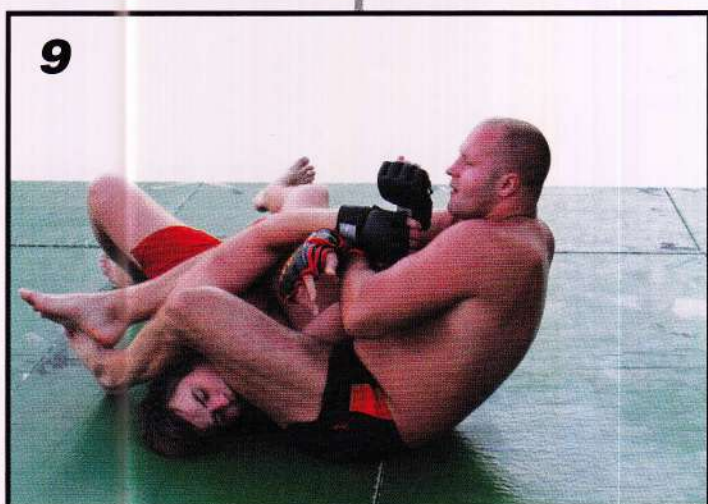


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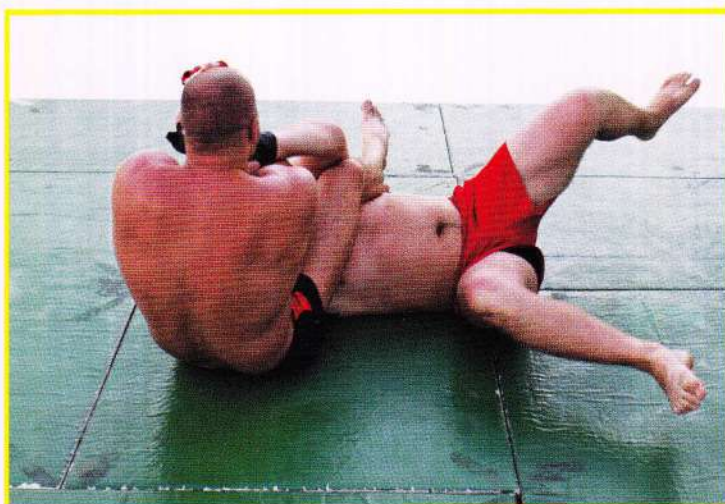


As I drive Kirill toward his back using my legs, I keep his right arm pinned to my chest.

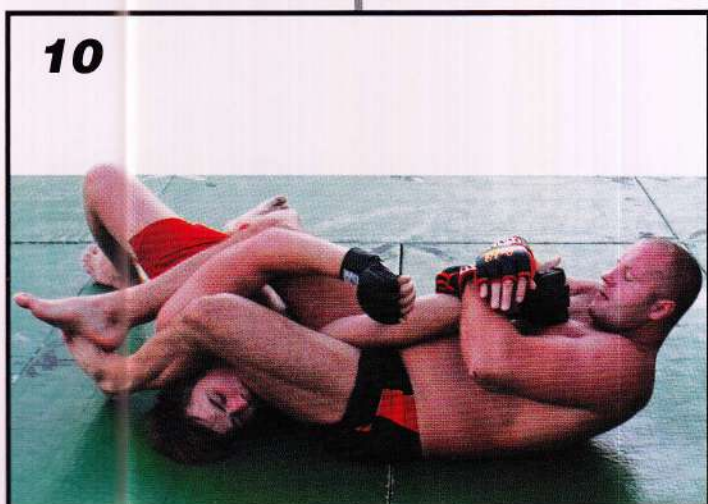
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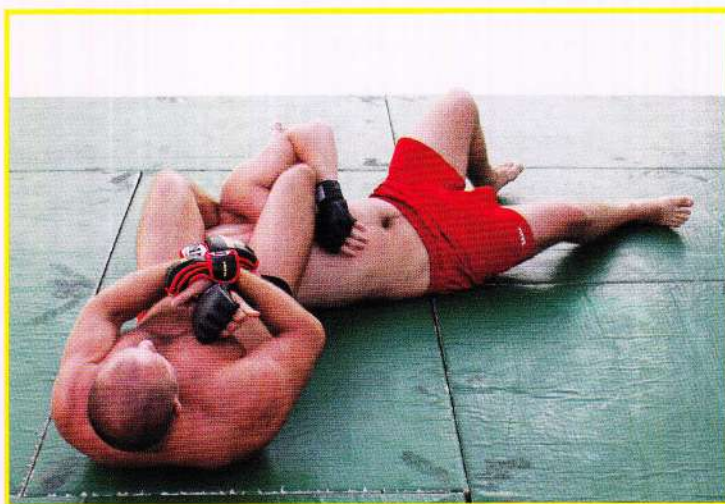
Continuing to apply downward pressure to Kirill's head and the side of his body using my legs, I sit up and force him to tumble over his right shoulder. As he lands on his back, I hook my left foot underneath my right foot.



10



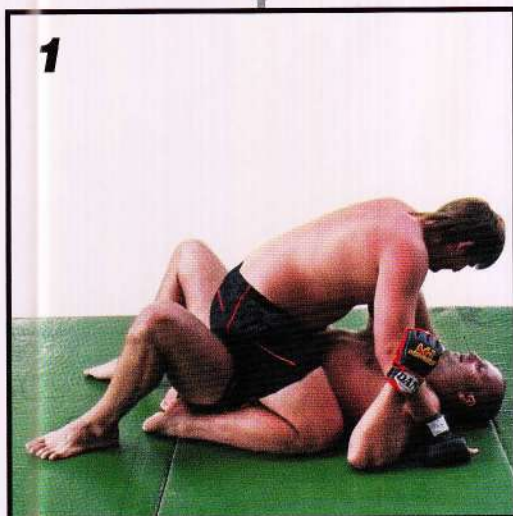
The instant Kirill lands on his back, I maintain downward pressure with my legs to prevent him from sitting up and escaping. To finish the armbar, I grab his right arm with both hands, drop to my back, and elevate my hips into his elbow.



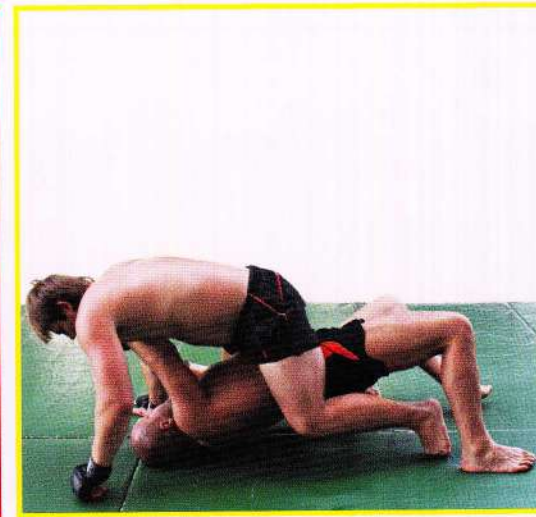
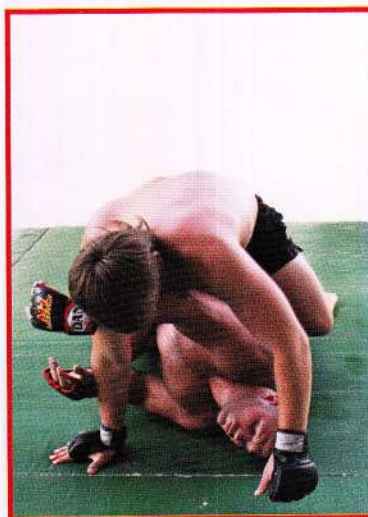
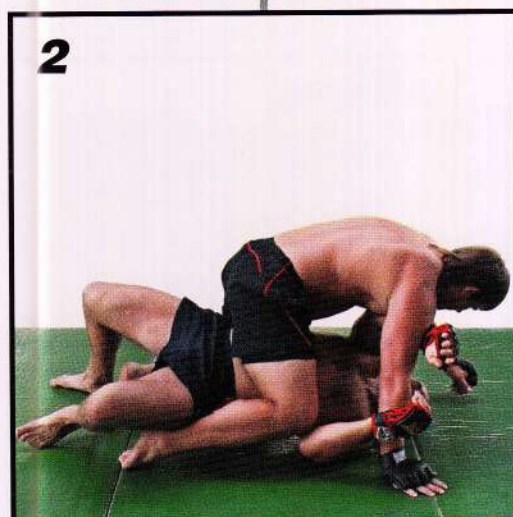
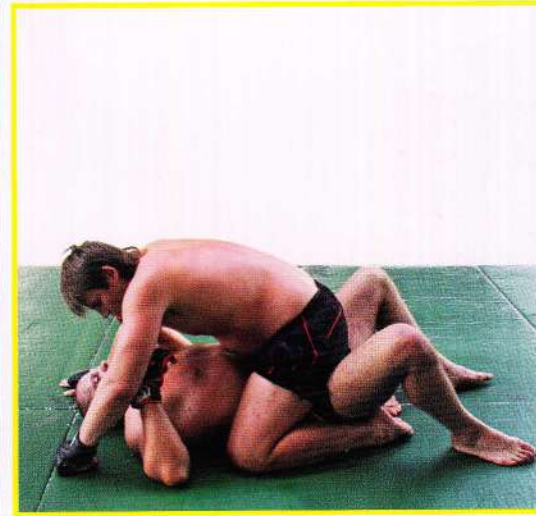
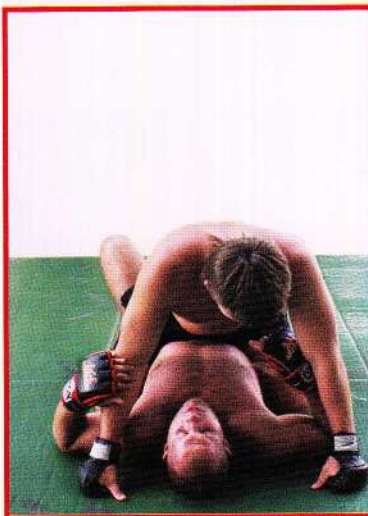


## REVERSE BRIDGE SUMMERSAULT ESCAPE

Although intentionally giving your opponent an opening to transition into a submission may seem like a terrible idea, at times it can be your best means of escape. A good example is when an opponent is mounted on top of you, pummeling your face with strikes. The referee is shouting at you to escape, and if you don't do something fast, he will end the fight. If you've tried all your escapes to no avail, baiting your opponent to apply a submission, and then working to escape that submission, can sometimes be your only means of survival. In this particular mounted situation, I bridge over one of my shoulders and extend an arm into my opponent's chest, giving him a perfect opportunity to apply an armbar. The basic armbar is a submission that all MMA fighters have in their arsenal, so the majority of the time my opponent will hook my arm to secure it to his chest and then spin his hips behind my arm to apply the submission. As he makes the transition, I'll roll over the back of my shoulders and do a type of summersault without my hands, placing me in my opponent's guard. The key to success is executing the flip before your opponent can secure the submission. If you stall even for a split section, your chances of escape are slim. It is important to note that this type of technique should only be done as a last resort. A much better option is to work a safe and technical escape that won't put you at risk of being submitted, but having a fail-safe maneuver such as this one in your arsenal can mean the difference between a win and a loss. Techniques like the reverse bridge summersault escape should also only be executed by competitors who have spent an ample amount of time on the mat because in order to be effective, you must understand the movements your opponent will make when he applies the submission you offer him. If you don't understand how he will move, then it will be impossible to create a scramble and escape.



Kirill has secured the mount position.



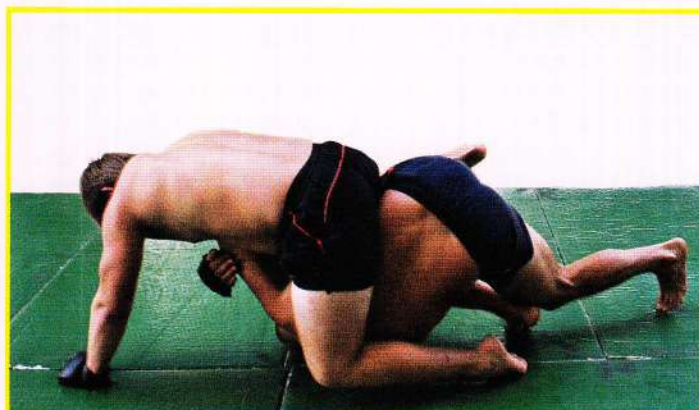
I drive off the mat with both feet, elevate my hips, bridge over my left shoulder, and reach my right arm toward the right side of Kirill's head. By extending my arm in this manner, I'm coaxing him into securing my arm and transitioning into an armbar.



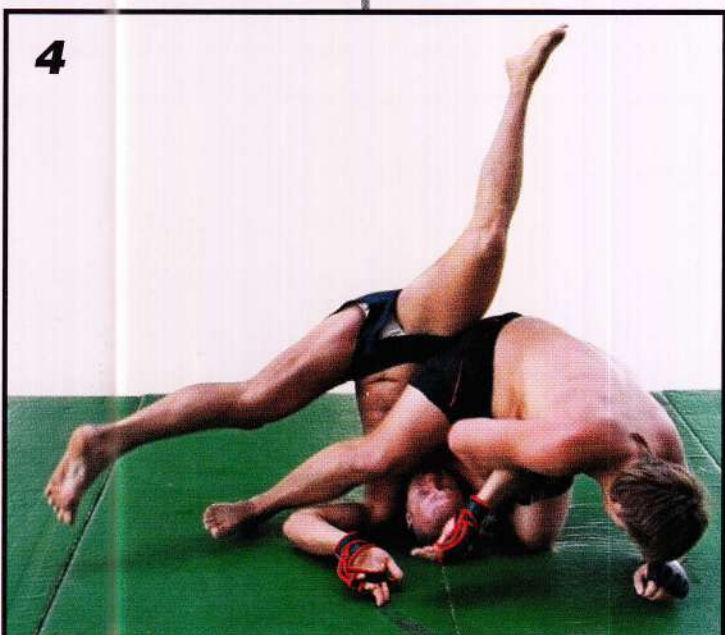
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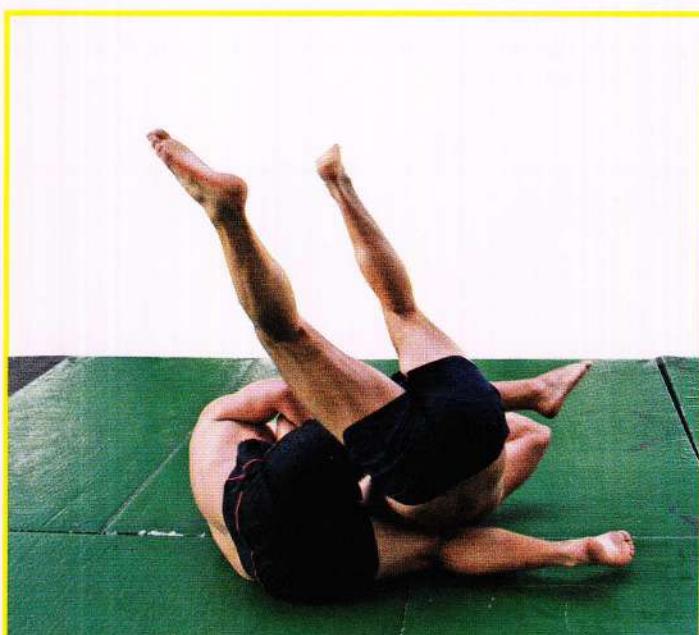
As I roll over my left shoulder, Kirill hooks his right arm around my right arm and begins transitioning into an armbar.



4



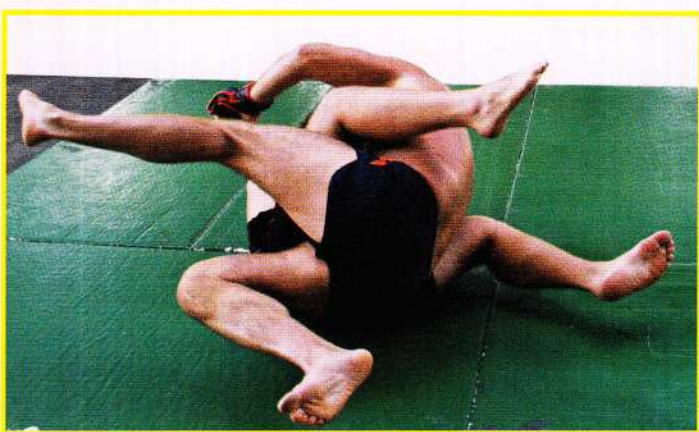
Before Kirill can position his hips behind my right elbow, throw his left leg over my head, and secure the armbar, I roll over the back of my shoulders toward my right side. Notice how I swing my right leg over the top of my body to help achieve my goal. The movement is similar to a summersault, but here I'm rolling over my shoulders instead of my hands.



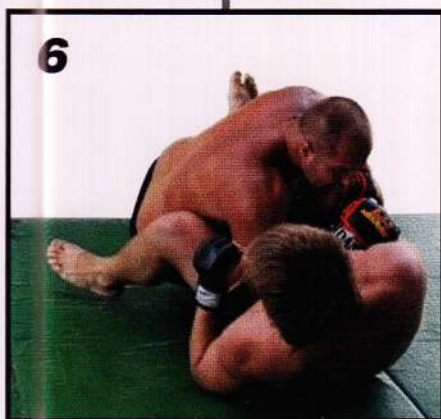
5



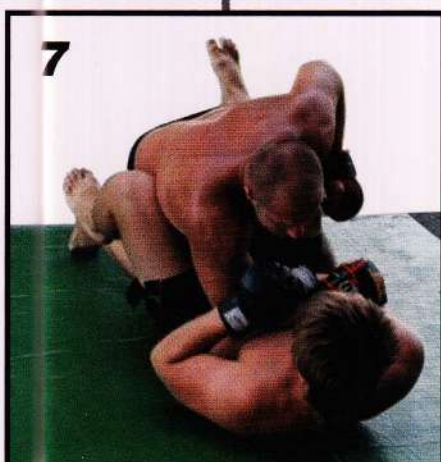
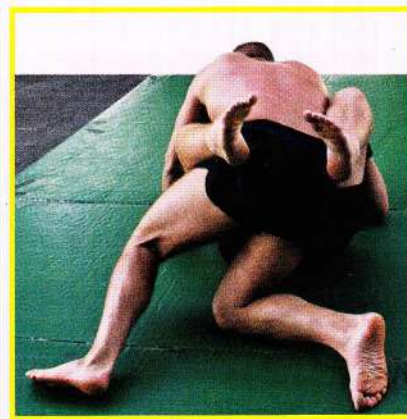
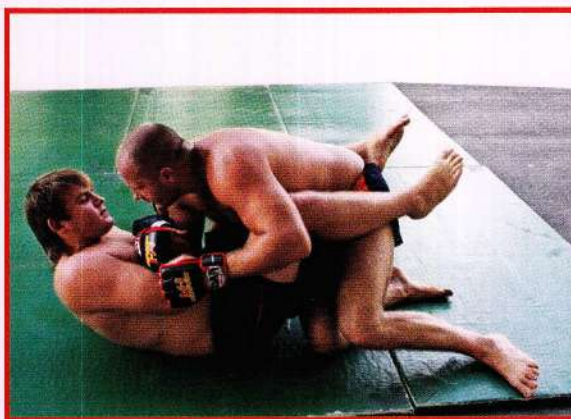
As I roll over my right shoulder, I move my right leg underneath my left leg and begin working up to my knees. These actions force Kirill to fall to his left side and roll toward his back.



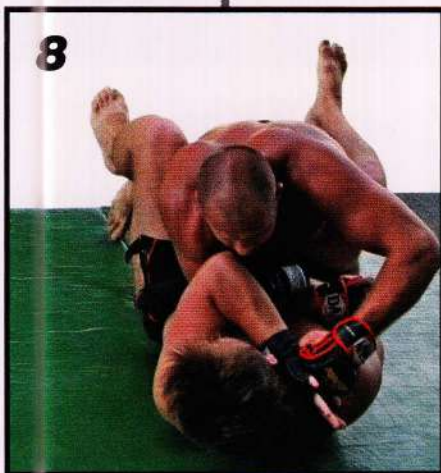
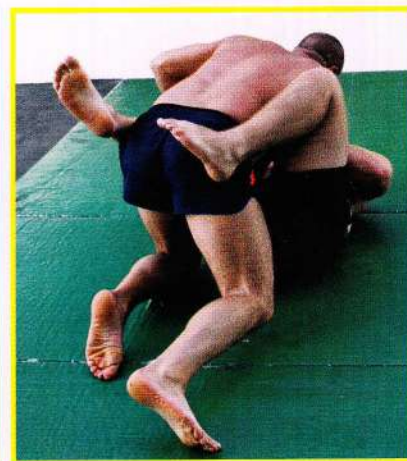
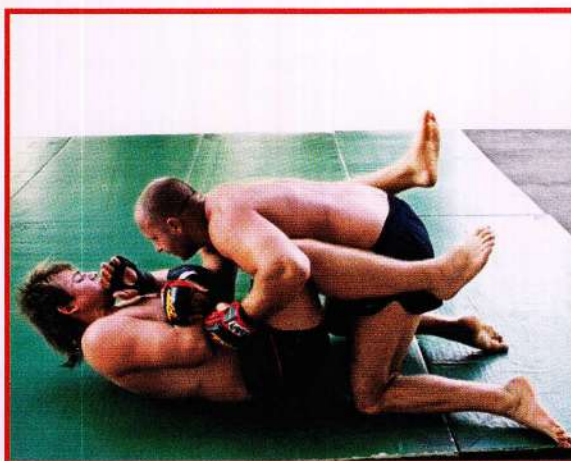




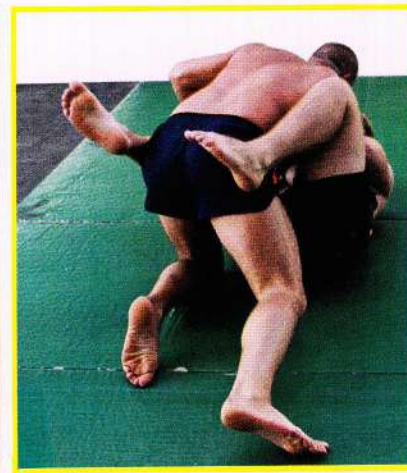
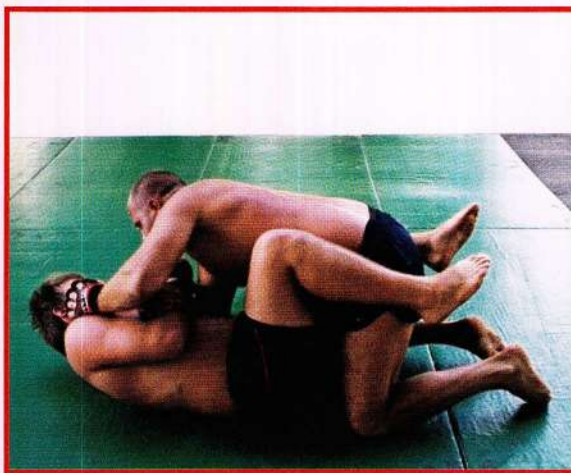
I post my left foot on the mat and climb up to my right knee.



The instant I land in Kirill's guard, I cock my left hand back and prepare to throw a punch at his face.



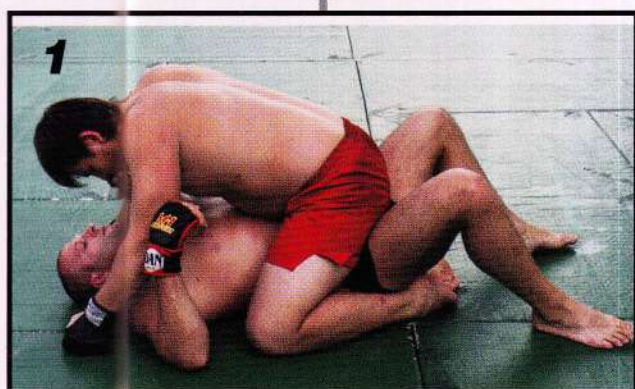
I throw a left hook at Kirill's face.



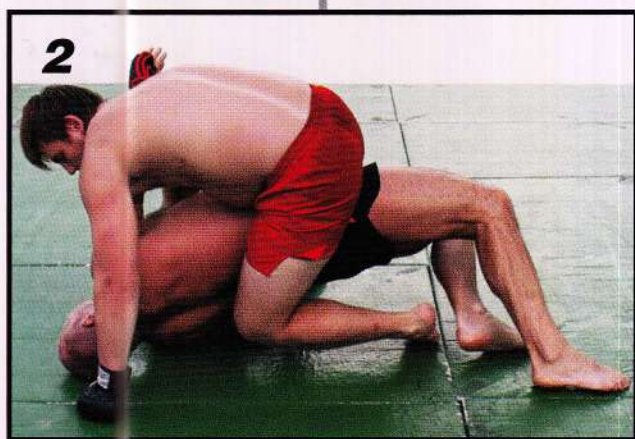
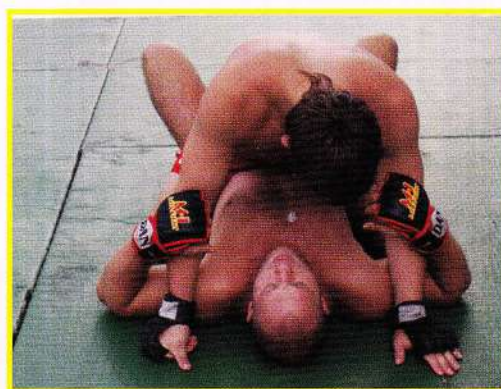


## MOUNT ESCAPE TO BACK ESCAPE

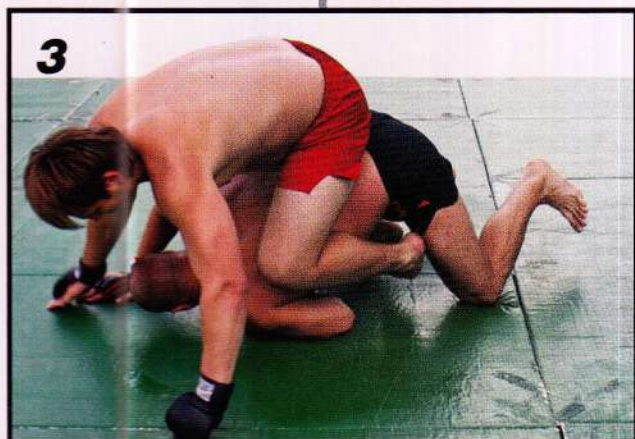
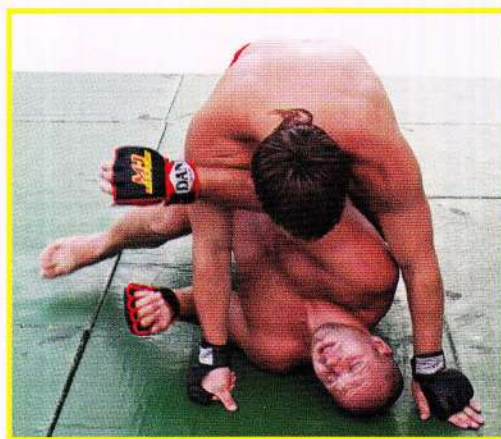
In the previous sequence, I baited my opponent into applying an armbar by bridging over my left shoulder and extending my right arm across his chest. As he transitioned into the submission, I rolled over my right shoulder, climbed up to my knees, and ended up in his guard. Below, I offer my opponent the same bait, but instead of taking that bait and applying an armbar, he floats his hips over my body as I bridge, allowing me to establish the all-fours position. To escape this compromising position, I'll roll over my right shoulder, putting my opponent on his back. Although my back will be lying on my opponent's chest, giving him a perfect opportunity to lock in a rear naked choke, I'll immediately latch on to the arm he has wrapped around my neck and clear it to the opposite side of my head. Once accomplished, my opponent can no longer keep my back pinned to his chest, and I'll spin my body until I'm chest to chest with my opponent. This places me in his guard, which allows me to immediately get busy with ground and pound. Just as with the previous technique, giving your opponent control of your back should only be utilized when he is completely dominating you from the mount and all of your escape attempts have failed. The escape, however, is excellent to utilize anytime your opponent gains control of your back.



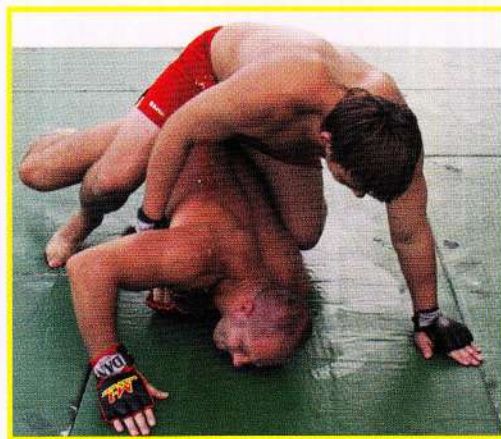
Kirill has secured the mount position.



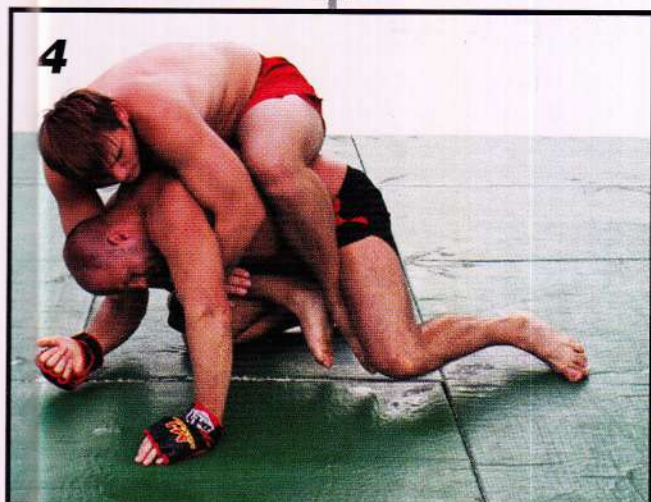
I drive off the mat with my right foot, elevate my hips, roll over my left shoulder, and extend my right arm across Kirill's chest in the hopes that he will transition into an armbar.



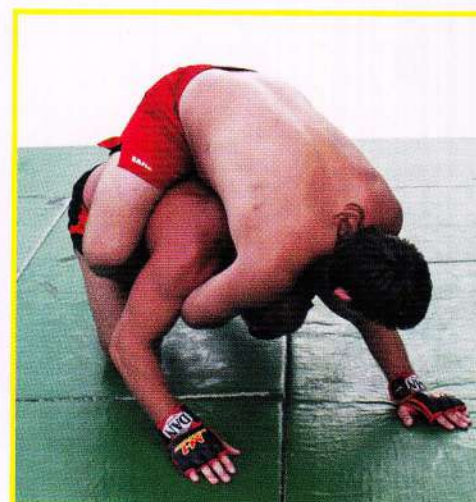
Kirill doesn't take the bait. Instead of swinging his hips behind my right elbow and going to an armbar, he floats his hips as I corkscrew my body and allows me to get onto my hands and knees.



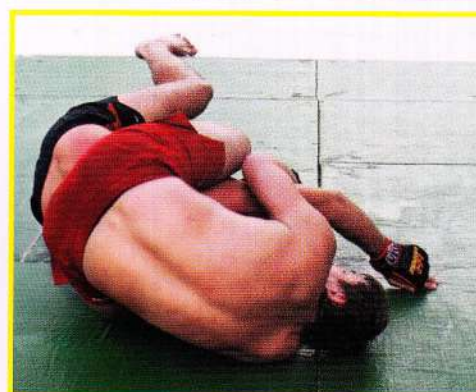




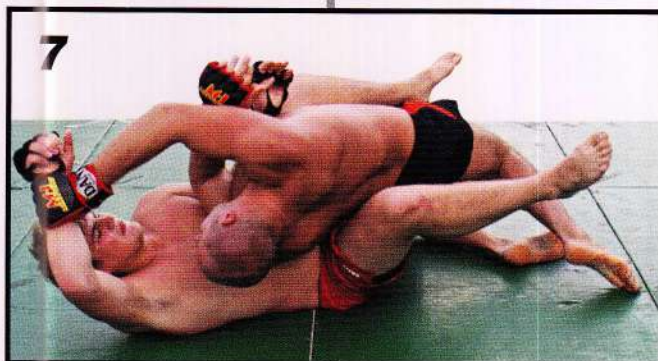
As I come up onto all fours, Kirill secures the rear mount position by hooking his feet around the inside of my legs, wrapping his right arm around the right side of my neck, hooking his left arm underneath my left arm, and gripping his hands together in the center of my chest.



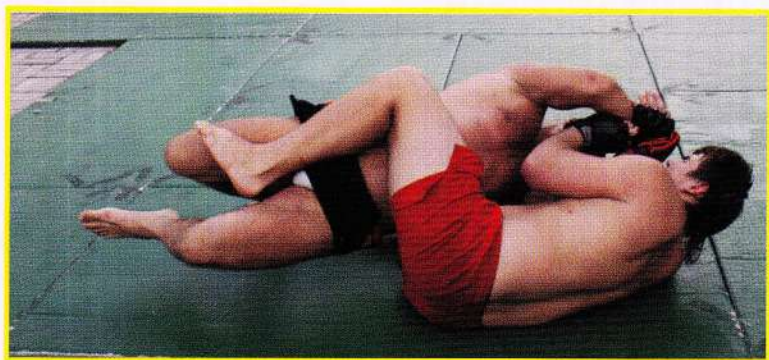
The instant Kirill secures the rear mount, I roll over my right shoulder.



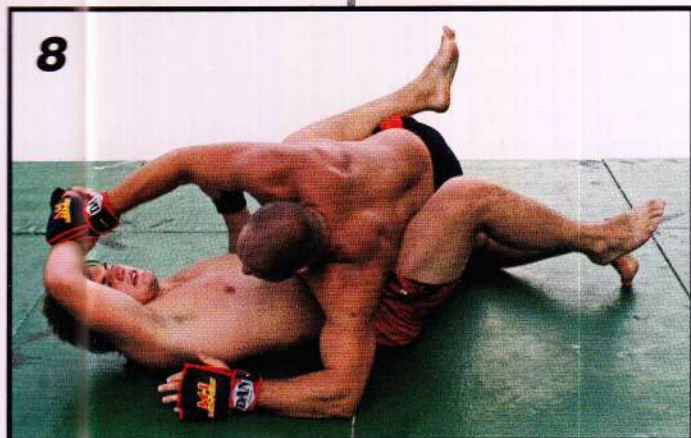
I roll to my back, post both of my feet on the mat, and grab Kirill's right arm with both of my hands. Notice how I am distributing all of my weight onto his chest by elevating my hips and arching backward. This makes it very difficult for him to set up the rear naked choke.



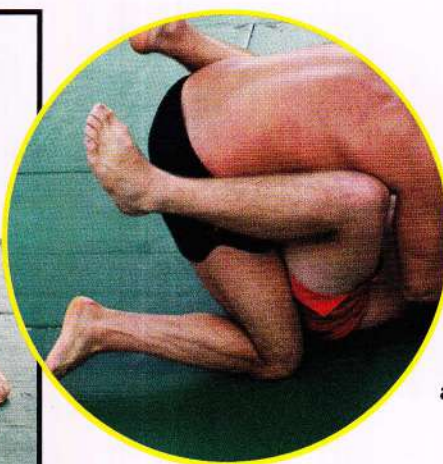
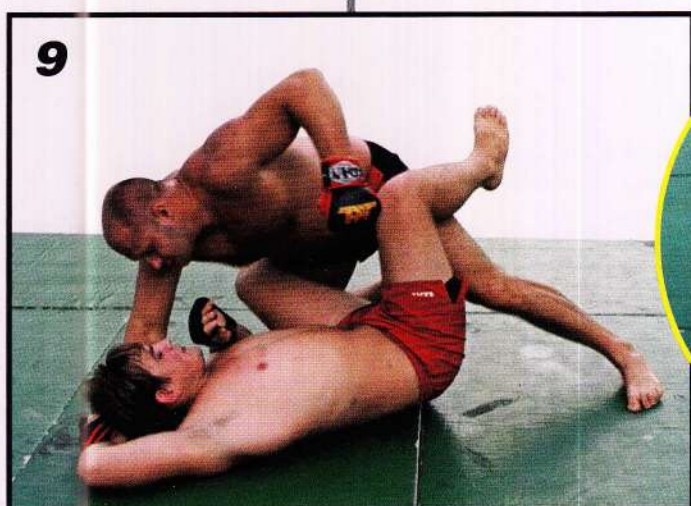
I clear Kirill's right arm over the top of my head, arch backward, and twist my body in a counterclockwise direction. Notice how these actions clear his right hook from my body, which allows me to spin into his guard.



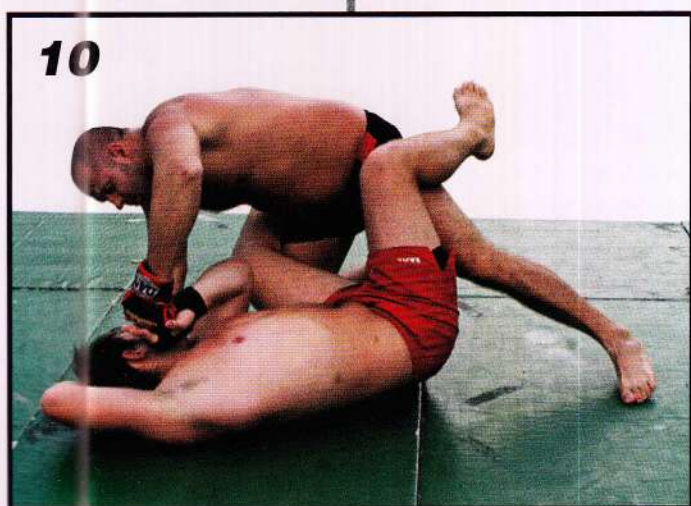




Still controlling Kirill's right arm with my right hand and twisting my body in a counterclockwise direction, I move my right leg over my left leg and plant my left elbow on the mat on Kirill's right side.



To position myself for strikes, I drive my right knee into Kirill's left buttock, post my left foot on the mat, drive my weight forward, and pin his right arm behind his head using my right hand. Next, I cock my left hand back and prepare to throw punches at his face.



I throw a left punch at Kirill's face.

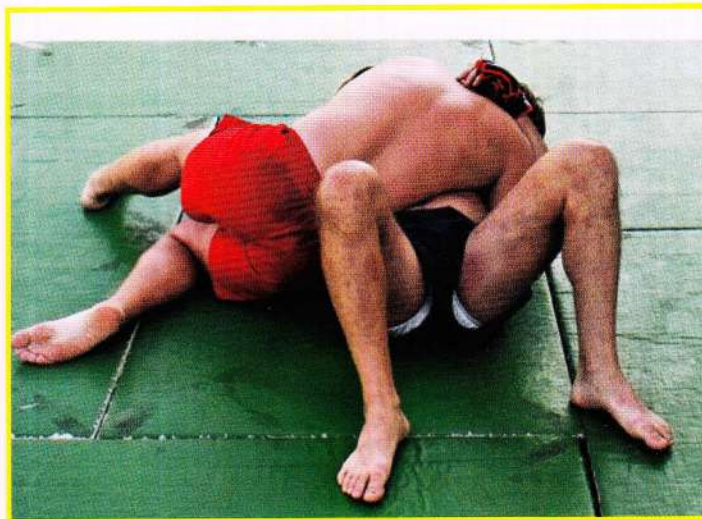


## SIDE CONTROL ESCAPE

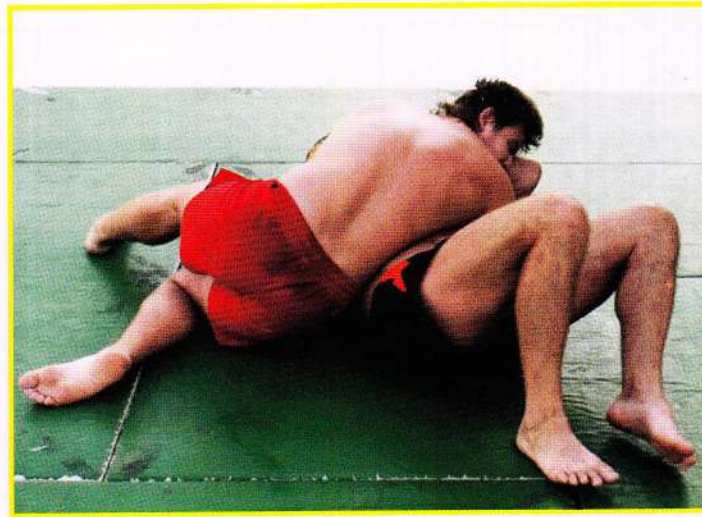
This is a basic yet very effective technique that can be used to escape the bottom side control position. If you look at the first photo in the sequence below, you'll notice that my opponent has established a far-side underhook, wrapped his arm nearest to my head around the back of my neck, and positioned his hips so that they are facing my head. To prevent him employing one of the numerous attacking options he has from this position, I drive his head toward his legs using my left arm and walk my legs out from underneath his body. This removes a large portion of his weight from my torso, which allows me to sit up, drive my opponent to his back, and establish the top side control position. In order to be effective with this technique, it must be executed quickly and in one fluid movement. The goal is to sit up and drive your opponent to his back before he can adjust his hips and pin your back to the mat by redistributing his weight on your torso. I know for a fact this technique works because I used it against Antonio Nogueira, one of the most accomplished jiu-jitsu practitioners fighting in MMA.



**1** Kirill has secured side control. Notice how he has wrapped his left arm underneath my head, established a right underhook on my left arm, and positioned his hips so they are facing my head.



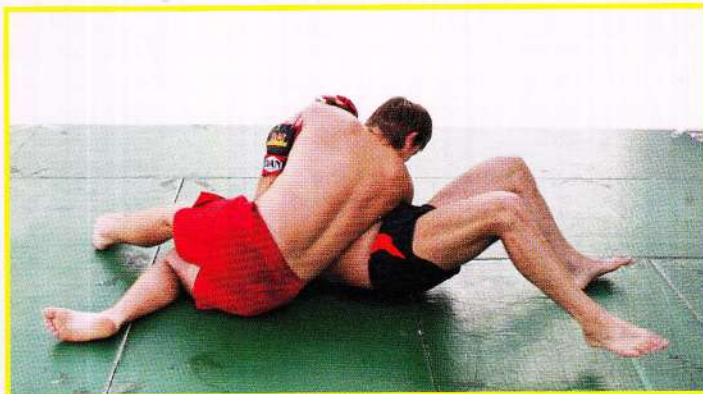
**2** To begin my escape, I drive my left forearm into the left side of Kirill's face and begin walking my legs in a counterclockwise direction toward our heads.



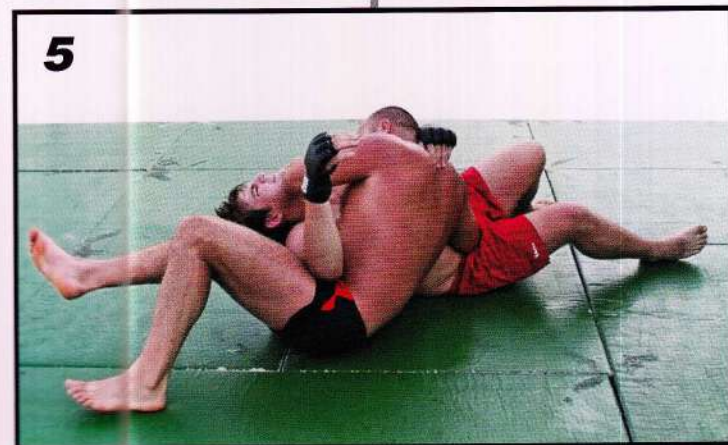




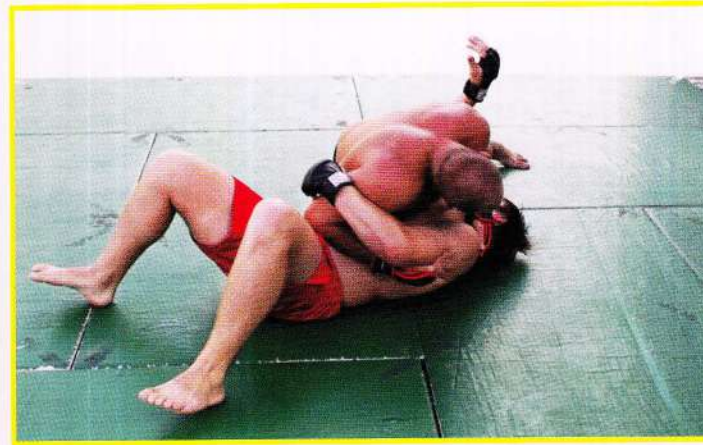
Still circling my legs and hips in a counterclockwise direction, I force Kirill's head toward our legs by driving the outside of my left forearm into his face.



Continuing to drive Kirill's head toward my legs using my left forearm, I hook my right hand underneath his left triceps and then use that grip as an anchor to begin sitting up.



Still driving my left forearm into Kirill's face and rotating my body in a counterclockwise direction, I post my left foot on the mat and sit up. Notice how the combination of my actions forces Kirill toward his back.

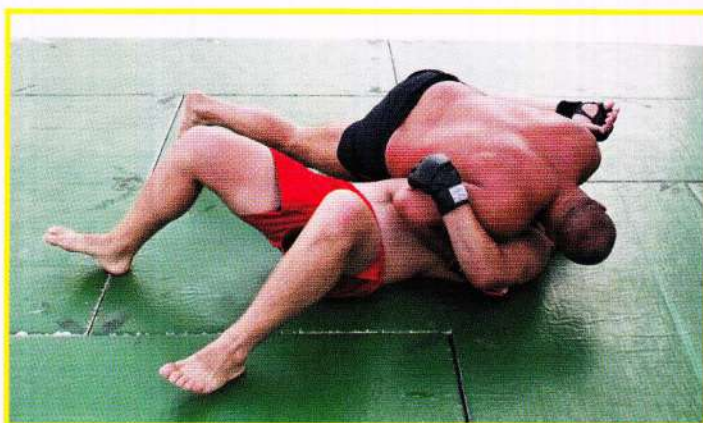




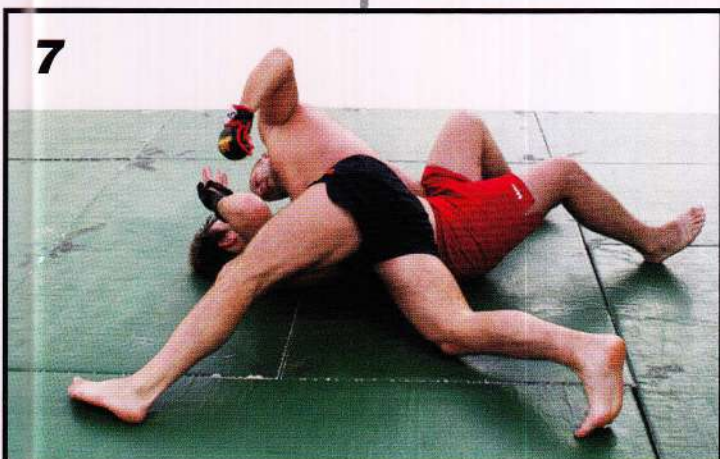
6



Positioning my weight over Kirill's torso, I move my right leg underneath my left leg.



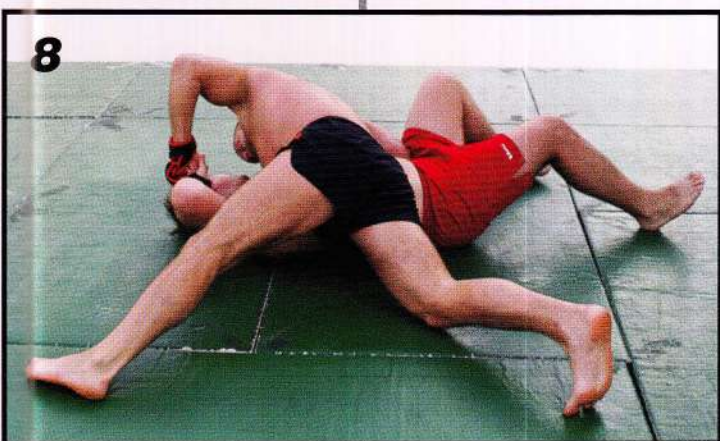
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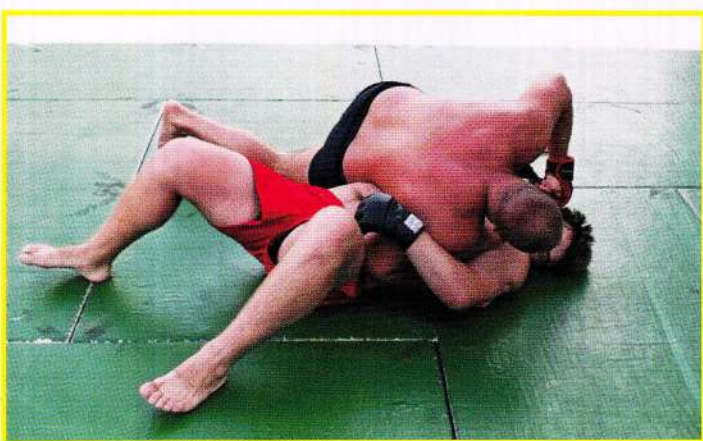
To pin Kirill on his back, I sprawl my right leg back and distribute all of my weight over his torso. Now that I have him trapped beneath me, I cock my left hand back to throw punches.



8

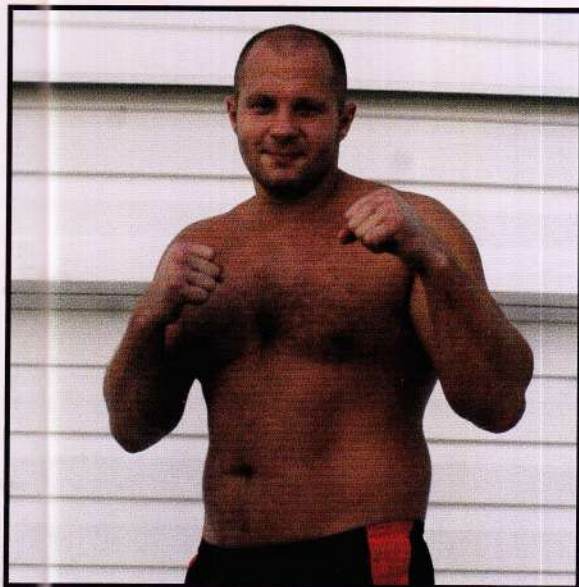


I throw a left hook at Kirill's face.

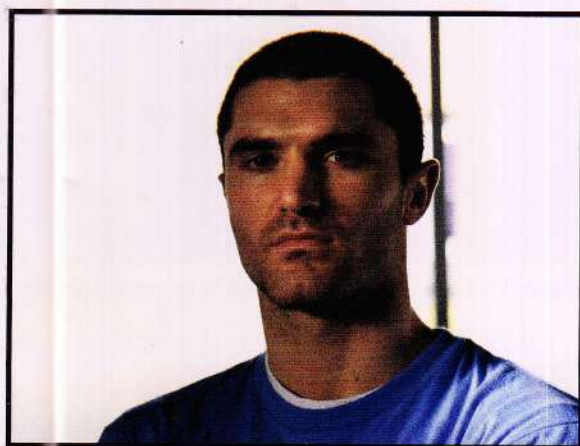




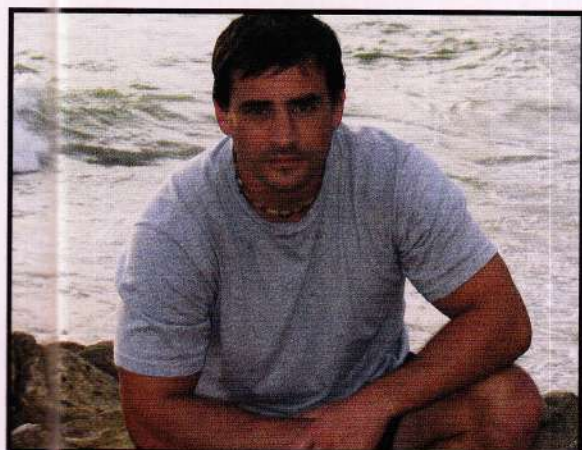
## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



**FEDOR EMELIANENKO**, the former PRIDE heavyweight champion, is considered by numerous fighting publications and millions of fight fans to be the best heavyweight mixed martial artist in the world.



**GLEN CORDOZA** is a professional Muay Thai kickboxer and mixed martial arts fighter. He is the author of eight books on the martial arts.



**ERICH KRAUSS** is a professional Muay Thai kickboxer who has lived and fought in Thailand. He has written for the New York Times and is the author of nineteen books. His first fiction title will be released in 2008.



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# FEDOR

Fedor Emelianenko is the number one ranked heavyweight mixed martial artist in the world. As a child he mastered judo and sambo, and after serving in the Russian Army as a young adult, he took the MMA world by storm. In *RINGS*, a Japanese MMA promotion, he dominated the competition and quickly earned the Heavyweight Title Belt. Next, he conquered the Pride Fighting Championships' Heavyweight Belt by defeating the most feared fighters on the planet, including Antonio Rodrigo Nogueira and Mirko "Cro Cop" Filipovic. Defending his title four times and winning the Pride Grand Prix tournament, he proved that no man could contend with his fighting style and techniques. In *FEDOR*, for the first time, Emelianenko shares the fighting secrets that he used to devastate all in his path while on his meteoric ascent to the top of the mixed martial arts mountain. Covering everything from striking to takedowns to throws to submissions to his infamous ground and pound, the undisputed king of mixed martial arts divulges a complete fighting system. Whether you are new to fighting or an experienced mixed martial artist, this book provides all the tools you'll need to fight like a champion.



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